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Educational Survey of Grand Forks County

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EDUCATIONAL SURVEY OF GRAND FORKS COUNTY

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This thesis, offered by George F. Stewart as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education in the University of North Dakota, is hereby approved by the committee under whom the work was done.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

When North Dakota joined with the Federal government in the formation of the compact known as the enabling act, the people of the new state agreed, among other things, "That provision shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of systems of public schools, which shall be open to all children of said states, and free from sectarian control." In the first instrument of government of the new state, the constitution, they committed themselves definitely to the policy of making these systems of public schools extensive and complete. Two sentences taken from article eight of our state constitution show how sweeping this commitment was. "The legislative requirements shall be irrevocable without the consent of the United States and the people of North Dakota." "The legislative assembly shall provide at its first session after the adoption of this Constitution for a uniform system for free public schools throughout the state, beginning with the primary and extending through all grades up to and including the normal and collegiate course."

After accepting the responsibility of setting up and maintaining this system, the legislature acting for the people, made the very serious mistake of organizing the public school educational system of the state into

extremely small units. In the five counties of Walsh, Grand Forks, Pembina, Cass, and Barnes, small districts of usually nine sections of land were organized. In the remaining counties the township was made the basis of the unit. True, a few larger units were formed in the cities and towns, but in the main the set-up was in very small units.

Even more serious was the mistake of failing to provide adequate financial support for these small units. Some provision was made for support by setting aside certain portions of land for school purposes, and providing that all fines in Justice and District courts should be diverted to an educational fund. This was far from being a fulfillment of the pledge to "maintain" the schools. The state created a handicap system and then when it came to supporting the individual members of the system, passed the buck by delegating that duty to the local management.

Glaring shortcomings of this plan were soon noticed. There was wide difference of ability to support adequate schools because of unequal wealth of the districts. There was just as great divergence in the desire of different localities to furnish adequate facilities, even though they may have had the means. The small units proved to be inefficient and uneconomical. To make partial amends the legislature made provision for the uniting of

districts where locally desirable. This was the consolidation law that resulted in quite a wave of centralization around 1908 and 1912. It was the earliest provision making possible a change from the small to large units. Its shortcoming was that it merely provided the means for centralization, but left all the initiative for using this means in the hands of the people. When initiative was lacking or when public opinion had not yet been convinced of the advantages of the larger units, no application of the consolidation principle was made in practice. As a result there are still hundreds of small one room units unable to offer anything but meagre educational facilities. This is most noticeable when the high school level is reached. A large percentage of rural boys and girls have been left out of the high school picture because their home districts cannot furnish its advantages.

Since the period of economic stress set in in 1929 there has been a quite general tendency to scrutinize this situation more carefully. The present period can be characterized as one in which the old institutions must justify their continuance not only in the light of economy, but of service. When previously almost any excuse would justify the expenditure of large sums of money for public purpose like education, there is now the tendency to reward economical efforts. During this period, the small units have been severely handicapped financially. They were threatened with closing of doors, and would have been forced to

this extreme except for the timely application of Federal aid. This fact, then, of the depression's contribution to the idea of change, and the light it threw on the impracticability of the small unit has furnished some of the background for this study.

Then in 1933 another factor entered the picture--that of the equalization measure. Conscious of the need for a wider basis of support, the state legislature passed what was known as the equalization measure. It was to furnish aid not only to these small units in a financial way, but was designed to equalize opportunities by helping handicapped districts more than those with a favorable valuation. It was inoperative because of the failure of the legislature to provide an appropriation with which to carry out it's provisions. In 1935, however, the measure was put into active operation by the passage of the sales tax measure, carrying the clause to convert a certain percentage of the receipts into the equalization fund treasury. Somewhat over a million dollars was also converted over to this fund by a refund from the surplus of the state hail insurance fund. Even though the sales tax should not be the permanent source of income to this fund, it seems reasonable to assume that the principle is in permanent operation.

Statement of the Problem

This brief history has been necessary as a background for the statement of the problem of this study. It was shown how the early act of our legislature in setting up an organization of extremely small units has placed a terrible handicap on education. Provision has been made for larger units, and more recently public opinion has recognized very definitely that the state does owe something in the way of responsibility to maintain its schools. After many years of agitation a reorganization by act of the legislature of our entire school system organization is very possible. The same power of the legislature that created local school districts can at any time destroy them with the view of setting up a different organization. This, it would seem, must be the next forward step in establishing a fairly permanent educational system that will grow and function in a manner befitting the needs of a great commonwealth.

Realizing this possibility, namely that in a few years we may be ready for such a step, this study is undertaken in order that facts, figures, and materials may be gathered which may contribute something toward its attainment. Before any sweeping changes are made in an existing system it has been deemed good practice to make a careful survey of these existing conditions to see what light they may shed on the general situation. In this particular

study it will be to see if present existing conditions bear out the general contention that small educational units are not economical, that inequalities do exist, and that educational facilities are not universally available. It will be the purpose in this study to make an impartial survey of the general educational facilities. It is hoped that the material may be of some help by way of contributing to the general movement toward which we seem to be headed. It is also hoped that the data of this survey may be of some use should we be confronted with the immediate problem of setting up larger units of public school administration in North Dakota.

Delimitation:

Because of the large amount of available data, the extent of our present organization, and the author's first-hand information concerning local conditions, this study has been limited to Grand Forks County. As a matter of fact there is too much material available in a study of one county to enable one to do justice to it in a thesis of this size. Attention is here called to other studies that have been made in Grand Forks County and outside partly because they place some limitation on this study and partly for their contribution to the general field of educational surveys in North Dakota. Otto Berg, in 1934, made a study of "School board practices in Grand Forks County."[1] Mr. Berg sought to justify the existence

[1]Otto Berg, Work of School Boards in Grand Forks County, Grand Forks, North Dakota (North Dakota Univeristy Library, Master of Science Thesis, 1934).

of small districts by checking the minutes of some twenty boards, large and small, to determine the nature of their activities. Since it is commonly accepted among authorities in school administration that boards of this type should restrict their activities to those of a legislative nature, when Mr. Berg found all but the largest boards engaging in those of the administrative type, he concluded that these small boards cannot justify their existence. They engage principally in activities that could and should be delegated to and carried out by a superintendent or principal under the direction of a board controlling and legislating for a larger unit.

In 1930 in an unpublished master's thesis, Barnes made a study of transportation[2] in this county, wherein he compared transportation costs by public or bus system and private or family system, and with similar costs in Minnesota. It has many points of interest and value, but does not place any limitation on this present study. In 1934, in an unpublished master's thesis, Shively showed the inefficiency of small districts[3] from the standpoint of purchase of supplies. While it was not made in Grand Forks County it is general in its applications and contributes to the long list of arguments in favor of larger units of control. Edward Erickson, in 1917, in an unpublished

[2]James Barnes, A Public School Transportation in Grand Forks County, North Dakota (North Dakota University Library, Master of Science Thesis, 1930).

[3]A. W. Shively, Certain Aspects of the Rural School Teacher for the Eastern Half of North Dakota (North Dakota University Library, Master of Science Thesis, 1925-1926).

master's thesis on "The Administration of Rural Schools,"[4] writesin general on the problems of the handicapped rural school from the standpoint of satisfactory supervision and administration. He draws applications from Walsh County.

Method of This Study

The general plan will be to set forth existing conditions in the schools of Grand Forks County in as wide a scope as seems advisable, in the attempt to shed light on the general problem. A large amount of the data has been taken from the annual reports of the county superintendent to the state department of education. These reports are in turn compiled from reports by school district officers, namely the clerk and treasurer. Many tables will be shown to develop comparisons between districts of various sizes. For some of these comparisons it has been found necessary to group all rural schools into one by averaging the figures for all. This is necessary because of the large number of one-room rural schools in this county, many of which are still made up of nine sections. Grand Forks County is one of several counties that have school district units of this size, as has been pointed out. Figures will be used to show comparisons of ability and effort and to show road conditions, physical features, and other data pertaining to the problem.

[4]Edward Erickson, The Administration of Rural Schools in North Dakota (North Dakota University Library, Master of Science Thesis, 1917).

CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTION OF GRAND FORKS COUNTY AND OF THE PRESENT SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Grand Forks County, the area included in this survey, lies in the northern part of the eastern tier of counties in North Dakota. It is bounded on the East by the Red River of the North, on the North by Walsh County, on the West by Nelson County, and on the South by Steele and Traill Counties. It lies in the Red River Valley, the Western portion being just on the edge of the valley.

The topography of the area is very level in the eastern portion, becoming slightly rolling in the western part. Three rivers drain the county. The Turtle River runs from west to east in the central part. The south western corner is drained by the Goose River, and Forest River cuts across the northern portion. Minor drainage channels called coulees, sand ridges, morainic till, and beaches of glacial Lake Aggasiz, constitute practically the only variety to the level landscape.

There is quite a variety in the soil conditions. Since the more populous areas are found where the soil condition is best, it is directly related to the educational problem. The best farming land is found in a narrow strip of four or five miles wide along the Red River, widening out at the southern end of the county, then extending west along the southern tier of townships to Northwood Township where it goes north to Larimore and

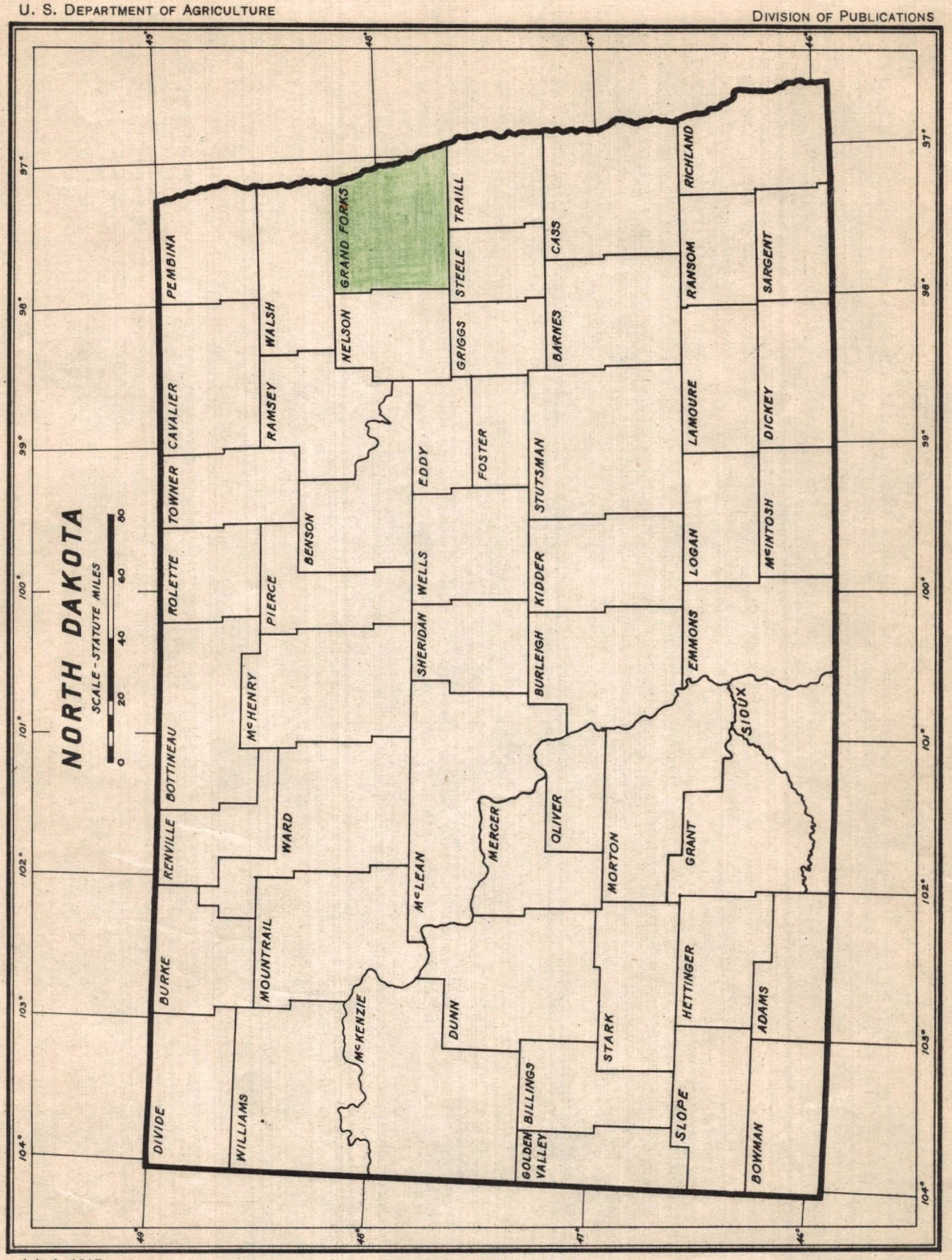


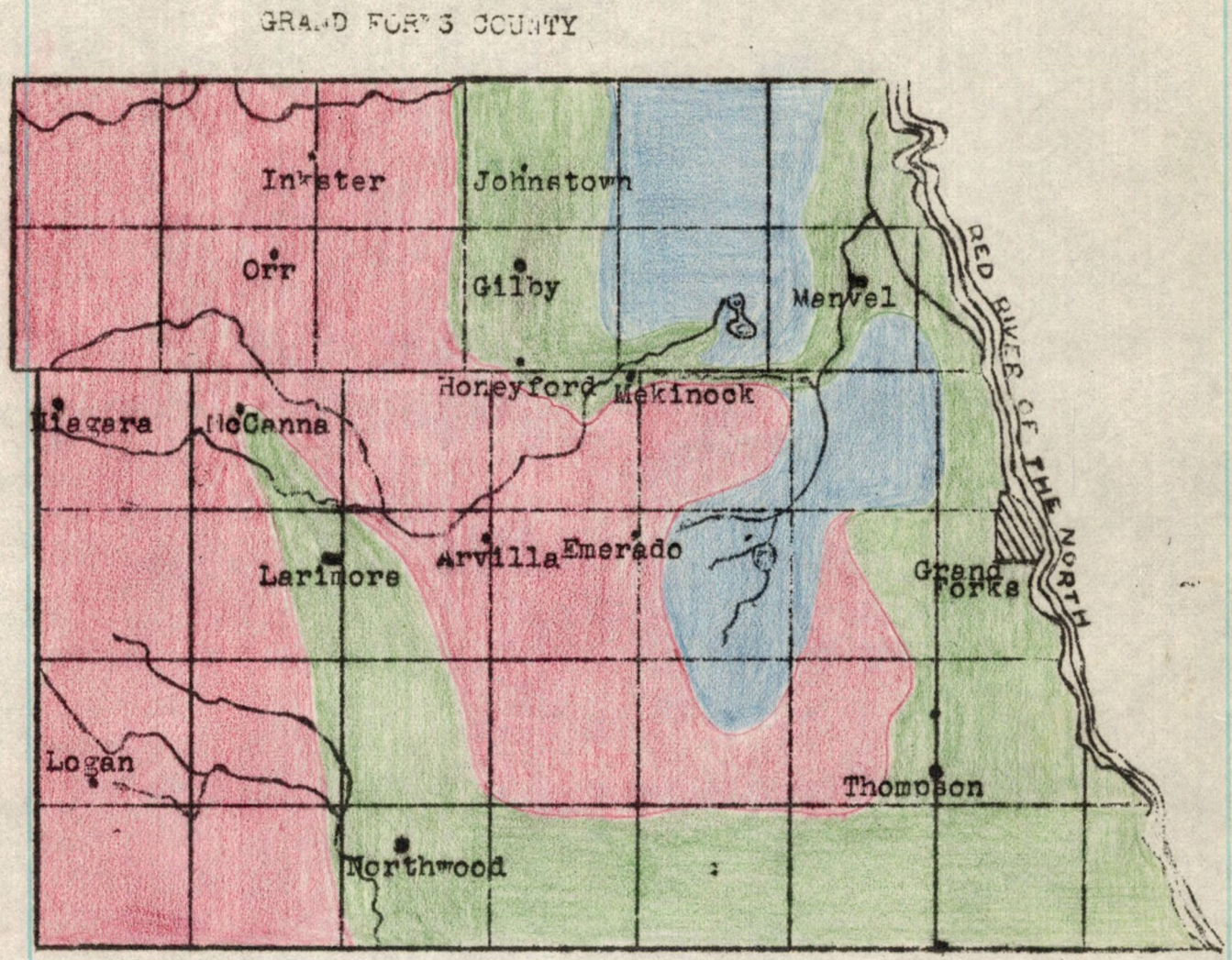
FIG.1.- MAP OF NORTH DAKOTA SHOWING LOCATION OF GRAND FORKS COUNTY, THE AREA INCLUDED IN THIS SURVEY.

narrows down to a point at McCanna. This latter area from McCanna South to Northwood is a portion of the delta of glacial Elk River. Another fertile area is found beginning along the turtle river at Meckinock and extending Northward through Gilby and Johnstown townships. There is quite a large portion in the east central part that is included in what is known as the alkali flats. It covers portions of Chester, Oakville, Blooming, Rye, Lakeville, Ferry and Levant townships. Since that is a very poorly drained area, there has been an accumulation in past periods of alkali salts that make the soil unprofitable for farming. The population is sparce in this region.

The western part of the county, except for the Elk Valley Delta, is lighter soil but very suitable for agriculture, although it is not of uniform quality. Roughly, this describes the very great difference in soil areas. These conditions are pictured on the map (Map 2), the most fertile areas being in green, the larger area of fairly good agricultural land in red, and the alkali flats in blue. It will be pointed out in a later chapter how this fact of soil conditions is related to the present and future school organization.

Railroads and Highways

Grand Forks County is well supplied with railroads and highways. There is a total of 215 miles of railroad, ninety-four miles of United States highways, 124 miles of other state highways, and 340 miles of county and township highways.



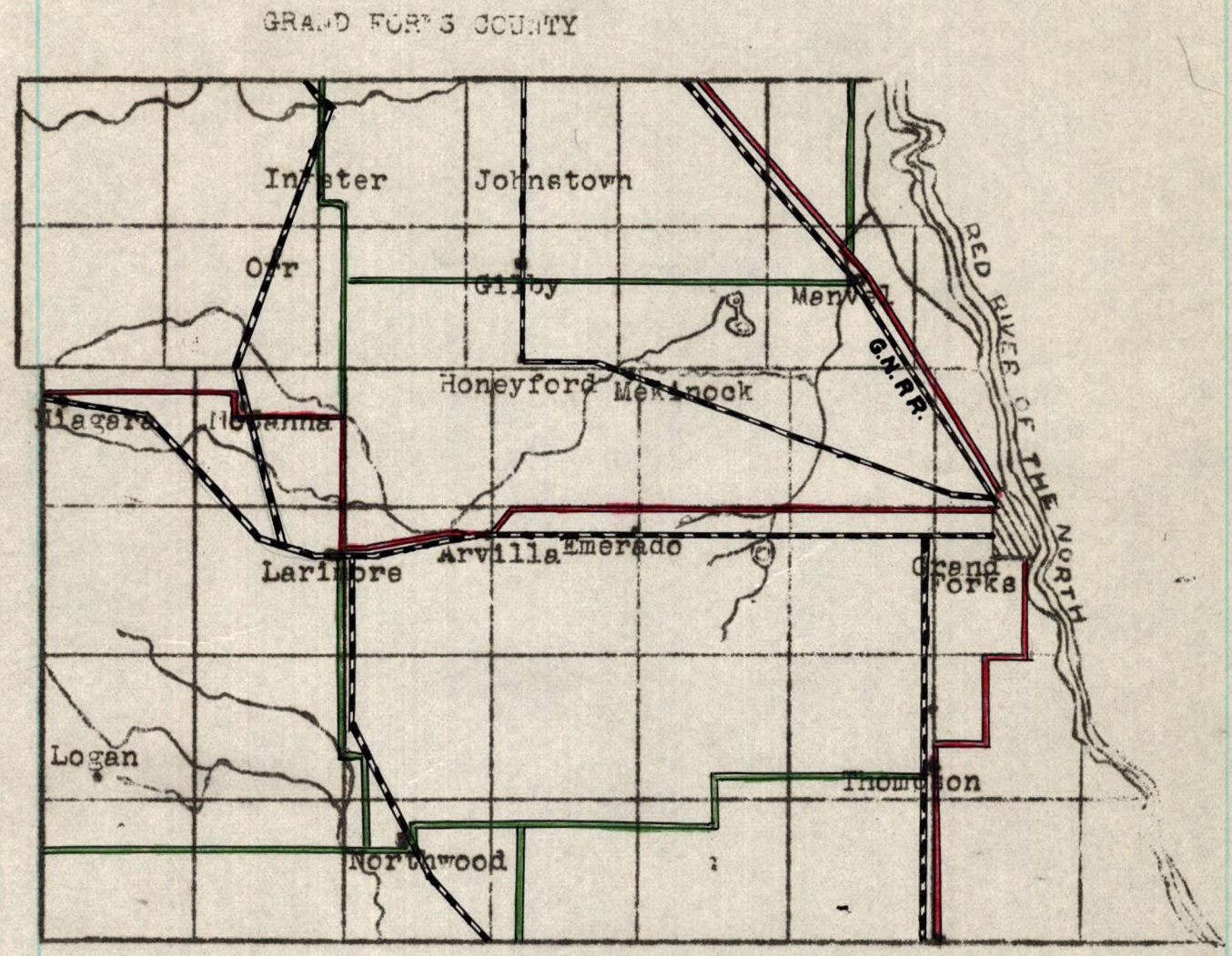
Map 2

Map of Grand Forks County Showing Variety of Soil Conditions[a]

[a]Most fertile areas shown in green. Good farming lands shown in red, and alkali flats in blue.

The main line of the Great Northern Railway divides the county into north and south halves, serving the town and cities: Grand Forks, Ojata, Emerado, Arvilla, Larimore, and Niagara. A branch of the Great Northern extends south from the University Station through Merrifield, Thompson, and Reynolds. Another branch goes northwest from Grand Forks to Manvel and Ardock, and west of Larimore a branch serves McCanna, Orr, Inkster and North. The Winnepeg branch of the Northern Pacific passes through Grand Forks and goes north and west through Kellys, Meckinock, Honeyford, Gilby, and Johnstown. The Soo in Walsh County is only from one to three miles away from the boundary line as it extends westward from Oslo, and is available to quite an area in the northern part of Grand Forks County. No place in the county is over twelve miles from a railway station either within or without the county. The average distance to these stations is much less.

United States Highway 2 follows approximately the main line of the Great Northern Railway, while United States Highway 81 intersects the eastern portion, following roughly the Great Northern branch lines that run north and south through Grand Forks City. These highways are mostly oil surfaced. Their total mileage is ninety-four. There is a total mileage of 124 other state highways consisting of numbers 33, 18, 15, 32, and 44. They are gravel surfaced and are well maintained in summer. In the winter the United States highways get first attention and the



Map 3

Map of Grand Forks County Showing Railroads,

Federal and State Highways

state highways secondary attention. Thus the latter are frequently partially blocked to traffic. All the larger towns and cities are served by this network of improved highways.

Three hundred forty miles of county and township highways complete a highway system in the county that means a great deal to marketing of farm products, travel to and from towns and cities, including the transportation of children to and from school. The county highways are partially graveled, some of them being merely well graded earth roads. They are often heavy in the summer, but being higher than the adjoining land are fairly free from snow in the winter and facilitate winter travel.

The population of Grand Forks is made up of quite a mixture and variety of races. Scandinavian, Scotch, German, French and Polish are most prominent. Now three generations removed from settlement days, there is a tendency for the old nationality lines to disappear. As affecting the educational problem, there is no noticeable difference in the attitude toward education on the part of different nationalities.

Farming is the principal, almost the only, industry in the rural areas. In the city of Grand Forks are located flour mills, packing plant, beet sugar mill, and lesser industries. Business of the towns is the usual miscellaneous list of establishments, elevators, warehouses, stores, garages, and banks supported by rural industry.

Cities and Towns

Grand Forks County has one large city, that of Grand Forks with a population of 17,113 (1930 census), practically half the population of the county. This is quite significant from the educational standpoint. Larimore and Northwood in the western part are the larger small cities with populations of 979 and 971 respectively. Other cities and towns are: Inkster, Gilby, Manvel, Thompson, Orr, Niagara, Emerado, Arvilla, Johnstown, Honeyford, Kempton, and Mekinock. Kellys, Powell, Shurmeyer, Shawnee, Merrifield, Holmes, Fergus, and Levant are small towns of lesser importance commercially.

Present Existing Schools and Their Organization

The public school system of Grand Forks County consists of one independent system, two special districts, and 103 common school districts.

District 1, the Grand Forks City system, is the only independent system in the county. The 1934 enrollment in all grades was 3,679, over one-half the total enrollment of all the schools of the county. It is significant that 103 teachers were employed in 1934. That gives a basis for comparing this large system with the more moderate sized and smaller ones in the county. The Grand Forks schools are modern and well kept, and complete facilities are offered. This is especially noticed in extra-curricular offerings. The opportunity for study of music

is not equalled in any of the smaller systems.

Larimore and Northwood are the two special districts. They are of nearly the same size, Larimore having an enrollment of 334; while Northwood had 261 in 1934. Larimore has twelve teachers, a good valuation with twenty sections of land consolidated from the rural sections besides the city valuation, and a new school plant built under the P.W.A. The curriculum is well rounded with a well organized Smith Hughes department in home economics and agriculture as the feature. This department is very attractive to farm boys and girls, and is doing much for the community agricultural welfare. The new plant and fairly large staff makes a complete set of extra-curricular activities possible.

Northwood is a smaller district in size and valuation, including just the city of Northwood. The high school enrollment is large, indicating the attractiveness of the school to boys and girls from the surrounding rural districts, who complete their high school work in the city school. It is an eight teacher system, four in the elementary and four in the high school departments. The Northwood plant is completely renovated and remodeled with a good sized addition completed in 1935.

Gilby and Inkster are the other classified schools of the county. The essential difference between this group of classified schools and the consolidated schools lies in the fact that the latter are required to take

state board examinations for the completion of subjects from the eighth to twelfth grades. Consequently they are more directly under the supervision of the County Superintendent.

Gilby has been a classified school since 1908. There is a modern school plant built in 1927. The teaching staff consists of six instructors. A complete curricular program is offered including labratory sciences, sewing and shop. A combined gymnasium and auditorium makes possible extra-curricular activities such as athletics, music, and dramatics.

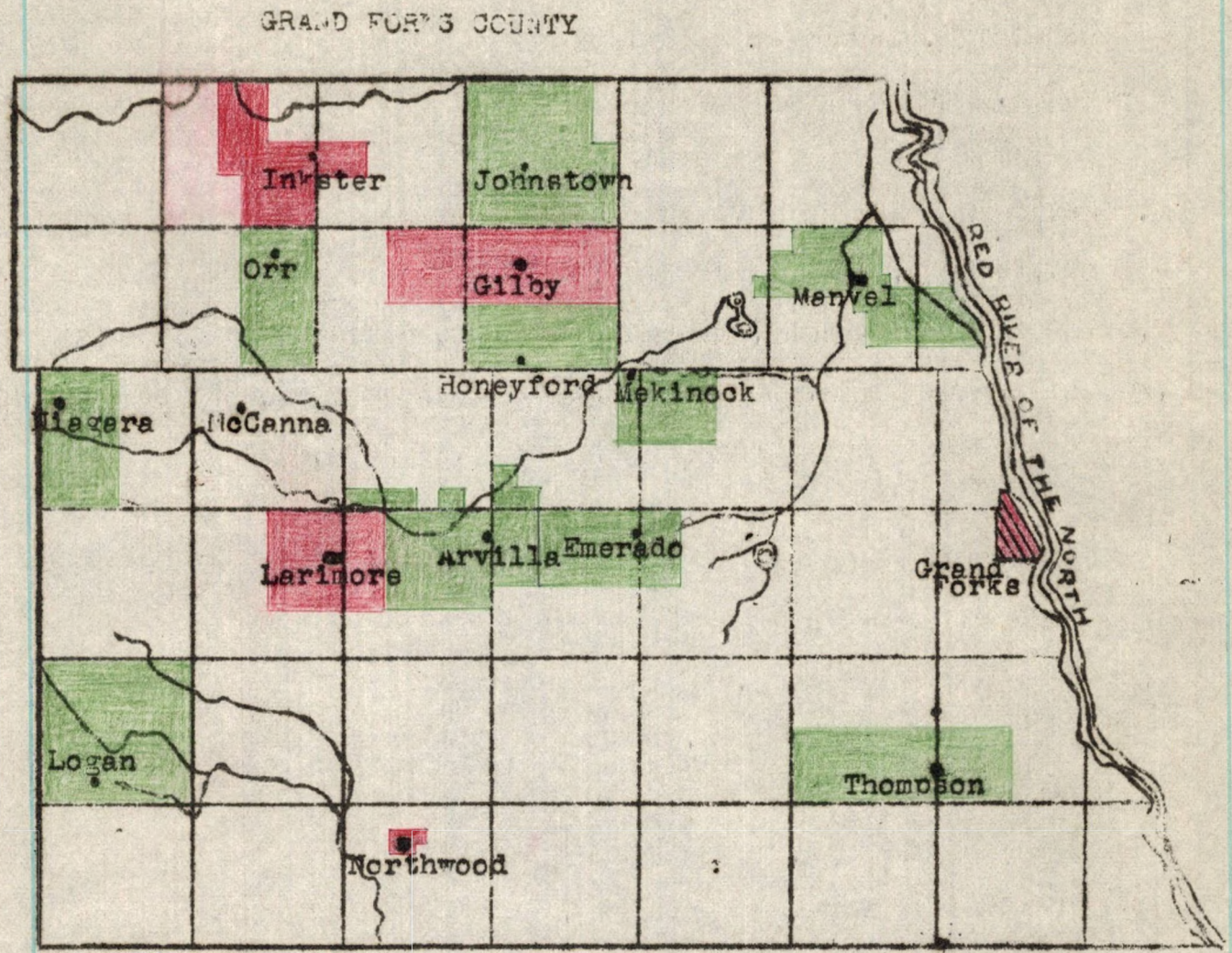
Inkster has five instructors, an older but well kept plant and a well organized system that attracts students from the outlying districts. The school is somewhat handicapped by the lack of gymnasium and auditorium facilities. Good work is done in the musical field of extra-curricular activities.

There are ten consolidated schools in Grand Forks County. The larger ones are Manvel, Thompson, Niagara, and Logan Center, the latter being the oldest consolidated school in the county. Others are Arvilla, Orr, Emerado, Johnstown, Meckinock, and Honeyford. Manvel and Thompson have five teachers each. Logan Center, Niagara, Orr, and Emerado have four each. Johnstown has three teachers, while Arvilla, Meckinock and Honeyford have two each. The latter two offer only a very limited amount

of high school work. All the others offer four years of high school work, and a fairly satisfactory list of extra-curricular activities. Crowded curricula and programs handicap the quality of instruction somewhat, but the best students from these schools can hold their own under competitive conditions.

Eighty-eight rural school districts maintaining somewhat over 100 one-room rural schools are scattered widely over Grand Forks County. The average size of these districts is nine sections, their average valuation is about $150,000.00, and the average number of students attending is about sixteen.

Map 4 shows the present boundaries of the School Districts of Grand Forks County not including the rural school districts. The latter comprise the areas not included by the others. Consolidated districts are shown in green; classified districts are shown in red. Black circles or ovals show the areas served by the high school departments of these schools. They overlap into the rural districts of course, because of the non-resident students from the rural districts. This map is shown here to present the present picture of the county. It shows large areas not served by the high schools, or but partially served. The present picture or map is not a finished one. Time will gradually change it. In Chapter 7 an attempt will be made to suggest reorganization of present school districts so they may better serve the educational needs of the whole county and nearby areas of surrounding counties.



Map 4

Map of School District Boundaries[a]

[a]Green--Consolidated
Red--Classified

Summary

1. Grand Forks County, the area included in this survey, has a variety of soil conditions. The greater portion of the county is fertile agricultural land.

2. The county is well supplied with railroads and highways. They mean much to education in the county, making transportation possible.

3. Grand Forks, Larimore, and Northwood are the largest cities. They include considerably more than one-half the population of the county.

4. The public school system of Grand Forks County consists of one independent district, two special districts, and 103 common districts. Eighty-eight of the latter are rural districts.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL POPULATION, TEACHING PERSONNEL, AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES

The school population of Grand Forks County for 1934 is divided as follows. The classified schools have a total enrollment of 4,526 of which the Grand Forks city schools list 3,679. The ten consolidated schools list a total enrollment of 849 pupils. A total of 1575 boys and girls are enrolled in the rural schools.

This enrollment is naturally heaviest where the adult population is most dense--in the towns and cities. A map showing density of school population by shaded areas would be heavily shaded in a few localities, and would show the rural areas in great contrast with a very light shading.

Table 1 gives the 1934 enrollment for the fifteen classified and consolidated schools of the county, and the total of rural schools. There being eighty-eight rural districts, and over 100 rural schools, the table would be too long to include them.

Relation Between School Enrollment and Census Enumeration

In a study that attempts to portray general educational conditions, the relation between enrollment and enumeration is quite significant. The school census is a list of boys and girls over six and under twenty-one years of age. Some of those on the census do not enroll in school so enrollment will never equal enumeration.

Table 1

School Population of Grand Forks County Schools 1934

Class and Name of School	Number of Students Enrolled	
Classified:		
Grand Forks	3,679	
Larimore	334	
Gilby	146	
Northwood	261	
Inkster	106	
Consolidated:		
Niagara	83	
Emerado	97	
Arvilla	78	
Honeyford	29	
Manvel	143	
Johnstown	64	
Meckinock	39	
Thompson	157	
Orr	69	
Logan Center	90	
Rural Schools:		
Total enrollment	1,575	
Average enrollment		17.8
Total enrollment of all schools	6.950	

The relation between total school enumeration and total school enrollment is shown in Table 2. A twenty-five year period extending from 1909 to 1935 shows the trend in enumeration and in not only total enrollment in all schools, but enrollment in the first eight grades, and in high school.

Census enumeration has increased from 7,970 in 1909 to 9,721 in 1935, the latter figure being the highest point reached in the twenty-five year period. This means that the potential school enrollment is still increasing.

If these young people on the census list are attracted to school in larger numbers, administrators will have to face the problem of increasing facilities.

High school enrollment has nearly tripled over the twenty-five year period. In 1909 it was 613, and in 1935 it had reached 1,709. The 1935 enrollment was the largest of any previous year. This points to the fact that Grand Forks county can expect some increase in high school enrollment.

Table 2

Census Enumeration and School Enrollment in Grand Forks County for a Twenty-Five Year Period

Year	Enumeration All Grades	Enrollment Total	Grades 1-8	High School
1935	9721	6956	5247	1709
1934	9675	6950	5241	1709
1933	9675	6692	5014	1678
1932	9795	6766	5128	1638
1931	9795	6703	5161	1542
1930	9381	6522	5154	1368
1929	9306	6735	5434	1301
1928	8991	6408	5193	1215
1927	8931	6316	5143	1173
1926	8816	6284	5121	1163
1925	9015	6269	5152	1117
1924	8925	6353	5249	1084
1923	8926	6318	5231	1087
1922	8605	6078	5045	1033
1921	8608	5962	4999	963
1920	8669	5876	5012	864
1919	8586	5718	a	a
1918	8809	5814	4990	824
1917	9020	6045	5172	873
1916	9195	6270	5430	840
1915	9062	6195	5401	794
1914	8977	6194	5480	714
1913	8738	5999	5319	680
1912	8451	6042	5430	612
1911	8197	6222	5563	659
1910	8286	6330	5754	576
1909	7970	6360	5747	613

[a]Not available

Enrollment in the firt eight grades of the County has actually decreased during the twenty-five year period. This is the most striking fact of the table. How can it be accounted for? It is commonly understood that the school census is poorly taken. Therefore the data is no more reliable than the original figures. It does seem, however, that errors in enumerating the school children would be merely a factor causing irregularities, but having nothing to do with gains or losses over a long period of time. It is barely possible that of recent years school district clerks have made a more careful check of ages and have therefore listed more individuals as being of the age called for in the census enumeration. Barring this possibility, Table 2 shows that boys and girls of Grand Forks County are not taking advantage of grade school facilities to the extent they did twenty-five years ago. This seems incredible.

The same facts are shown in Table 3 where the relation between enumeration and enrollment is shown in percentages. Total enrollment in 1909 was 79.7 per cent of the enumeration of that year. In 1935 the enrollment was only 71.5 per cent of enumeration. The years in between show a tendency to fluctuate between these figures. In 1909 grade enrollment was 72.1 per cent of enumeration, while in 1935 it decreased to 53.9 per cent. High school enrollment was 7.6 per cent of enumeration in 1909 and 17.6 per cent in 1935.

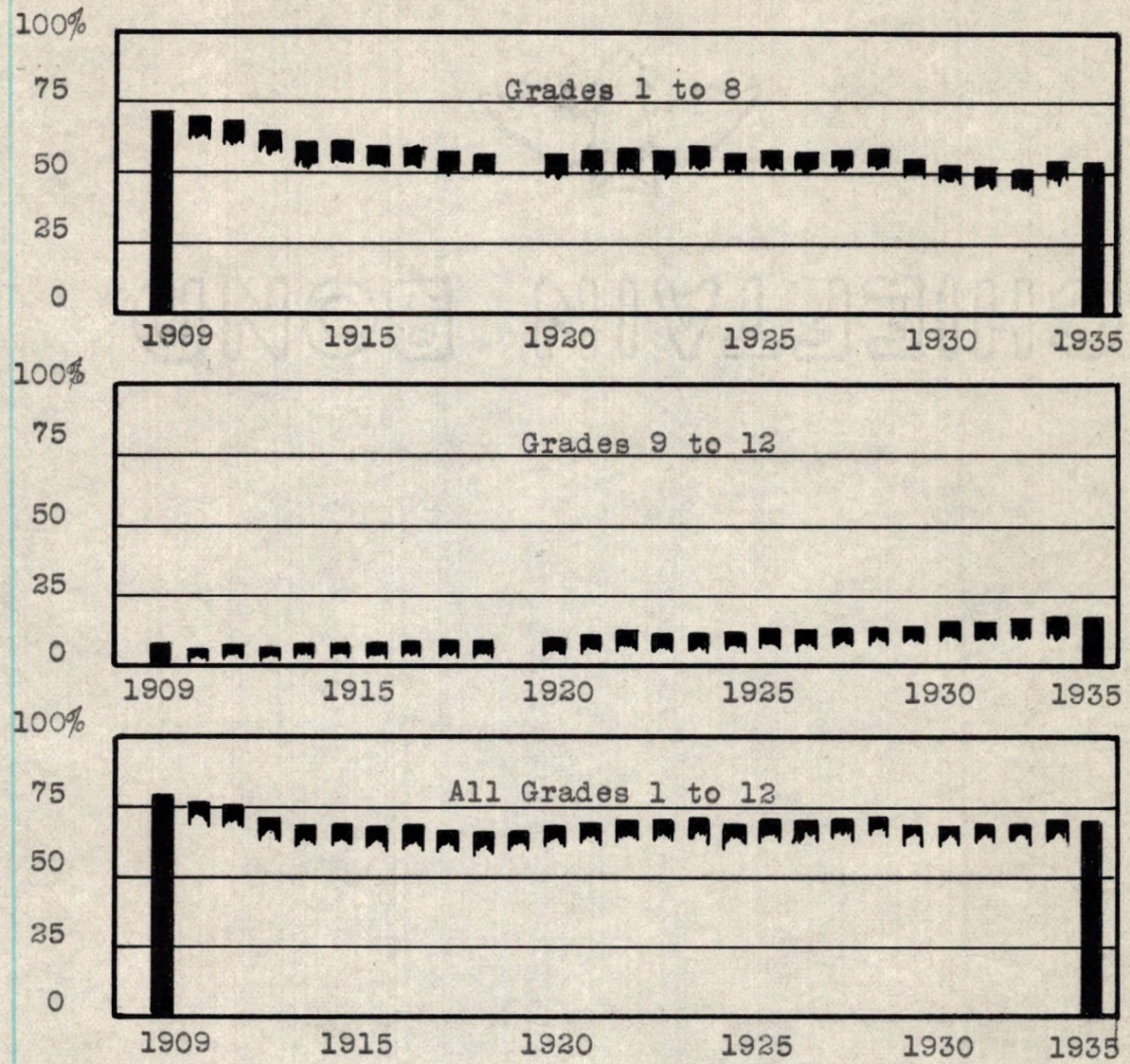
Table 3

Percentage Enrollment is of Enumeration in Grand Forks County for Twenty-Five Year Period

Year	Total Enrollment to Enumeration	Grades 1-8 Enrollment to Enumeration	High School Enrollment to Enumeration
1935	71.5%	53.9%	17.6%
1934	71.8	54.1	17.7
1933	69.1	51.8	17.3
1932	69.0	52.3	16.8
1931	68.4	52.7	15.7
1930	68.8	55.0	14.5
1929	72.3	58.4	14.0
1928	71.3	57.7	13.5
1927	70.8	57.6	13.1
1926	71.3	58.1	13.2
1925	69.6	57.1	12.4
1924	71.0	59.9	12.2
1923	70.4	58.6	12.1
1922	70.7	58.6	12.1
1921	69.5	58.0	11.5
1920	67.8	57.8	10.0
1919	66.6	a	a
1918	66.1	56.6	9.5
1917	67.0	57.3	9.7
1916	68.2	59.0	9.2
1915	68.3	59.6	8.7
1914	69.0	61.0	8.0
1913	68.6	60.9	7.7
1912	71.5	64.3	7.2
1911	75.9	67.9	8.0
1910	76.3	69.4	6.9
1909	79.7	72.1	7.6

[a]Not Available

The same set of facts are presented in graphic form in Figure 4. It shows what percentage enrollment is of total enumeration for grades one to eight; for high school grades; and the total of all from grades one to twelve. The latter of these figures shows the possibility of about a twenty-five per cent increase in total enrollment, if boys and girls were to take complete advantage of school offerings in the future.



Graph 1

Percentage Enrollment is of Enumeration in Grand Forks County for Twenty-Five Year Period

It seems difficult to account for the facts presented in these tables and figures. It might be suggested that the schools are not holding out attractive offerings. Further study might bring out the answer. Possibly it is the boys of the farms who are not going to school. Possibly it is in the rural districts. This particular phase of the problem could be decided by studying the ratio between enumeration and enrollment in various districts where the school offerings are such as to attract more students--the Smith-Hughes course at Larimore, for example. No doubt there is still a heavy burden on the administration of all schools in the County by way of working out really satisfactory curricula.

Relation of Enrollment to Enumeration by Different Classes of Schools

To find out where the difference between enrollment and enumeration is greatest, the figures for these two items were compiled by classified, consolidated and rural schools. Since the Grand Forks City schools have a large portion of the total County enrollment, the figures are given for that district also. Seventy-two and five-tenths per cent of boys and girls on the school census in Grand Forks city are enrolled in school. Five classified schools, Grand Forks, Larimore, Gilby, Northwood, and Inkster have 75.3 per cent enrolled.

The ten town and consolidated schools enrolled 90.1 per cent of their possible students in 1934 to far outrank other classes of schools in this respect. Rural schools dropped to 57.7 per cent, due largely to the fact that they do not offer any or very little high school work. Consequently town and city schools in adjoining districts get credit for their students in this table. Table 4 presents these facts.

Table 4

Enrollment, Enumeration, and Percentage Enrollment is of Enumeration for Different Classes of Schools in Grand Forks County 1934

School	Enrollment	Enumeration	Percentage
Grand Forks City	3679	5074	72.5%
Classified Schools: Grand Forks City, Gilby, Larimore, Inkster, Northwood	4536	6007	75.3
Consolidated Schools: Niagara, Emerado, Orr, Arvilla, Honeyford, Manvel, Johnstown, Meckinock, Thompson, Logan Center	849	942	90.1
Rural Schools	1575	2726	57.7

Reasons for non-enrollment will be presented in Cahpter 6.

Population and Birth Rate Trends

Population and birth rate trends are closely allied to the general problems of education. This is especially

true when we are trying to foresee conditions. The population of North Dakota is increasing slowly (Table 5). In 1890 the population was 190,983 and in 1930 it had increased to 680,845.

Table 5

Population of North Dakota and of Grand Forks County by Ten-Year Periods

Year	Population of North Dakota	Population of Grand Forks County
1890	190,983	
1900	319,146	
1910	577,056	
1920	646,872	28,795
1930	680,845	31,956

Grand Forks County population has increased slightly over 3,000 in the ten-year period from 1920 to 1930. Most of this increase has been in the city of Grand Forks. Figures not listed in the table show that the city increase from 14,010 to 17,112 during this period, while the county proper increased from 14,785 to 14,844. The significance of this fact is that schools outside of the city may not expect any material increase in school population unless this condition changes.

According to vital statistics,[1] births in North Dakota have increased over the ten-year period from

[1] Department of Public Health, Bismarck (Data furnished in answer to letter of inquiry.

1924 to 1934, but when the increase in population is considered, the birth rate per 1,000 of adult population has decreased from 23.5 per cent to 21.5 per cent. In Grand Forks County the birth rate has dropped from 25.9 per cent to 22.8 per cent. Both of these rates are higher and show less decline than the rate for the whole United States which is 22.4 per cent and 17.1 per cent. These figures are presented in Table 6. Population and especially birth rate trends should be shown over more than a ten-year period, but figures are not available for the latter, previous to 1924, that being the year that this state was admitted to the United States Registration Area.

One is puzzled in the attempt to interpret these figures in the light of their probable effect on school administration problems. A declining birth rate is offset by an increasing adult population. It was pointed out in this Chapter that school enumeration has increased since 1924 but has leveled off since 1930. Other factors that are unknown as to their possibility or extent of operation are: 1. The possibility that population will center in the Eastern part of North Dakota due to unusual conditions in the Western part. 2. The possibility that the enormous resource of coal in the state may open up industrial fields of enterprise, with a consequent influx of population.

Table 6

Births and Birth Rate Per Thousand of Adult Population for North Dakota, and for Grand Forks County

Ten-Year Period 1924 to 1934

Year	Number of Births in Whole State	Birth Rate for Whole State	Number of births in Grand Forks County	Birth Rate for County	Birth Rate for United States
1924	14,539	22.5%	746	25.9%	22.4%
1925	14,740	22.8	747	26.0	21.5
1926	14,824	22.9	722	25.0	20.7
1927	14,502	22.4	762	26.5	20.6
1928	14,901	23.0	740	25.7	19.8
1929	14,722	22.8	739	25.7	18.9
1930	14,639	21.5	760	23.8	18.9
1931	14,232	20.9	743	23.2	18.0
1932	13,858	20.4	715	22.4	17.4
1933	13,324	19.3	660	21.0	16.6
1934	14,613	21.5	727	22.8	17.1

Teaching Personnel

Grand Forks County had 268 teachers in 1934, instructing 6,950 students, or a teacher pupil ratio of 1:25.9. Of this number of teachers 134 were employed in the classified schools, the large majority being employed in the Grand Forks City schools. Thirty-four teachers were employed in the consolidated schools, and 102 in the one-room rural schools of the county.

Salaries paid teachers for this period show a sharp variation in amounts. In 1934 highest salaries were paid in the city schools of Grand Forks, where the average monthly salary was $133.00 (Table 7). The five classified schools paid an average monthly salary of $94.60

(not a weighted average). The range in the average salary in this group of schools is very great, from $133.00 to $69.00. The ten consolidated schools paid more uniform salaries, the average being $76.00, the highest average salary $88.88, and the lowest $60.00. Rural school salo aries were lowest being $51.61, when figured on a nine-month basis. Total amounts paid teachers was at the low mark during 1934, as figures not used in this study indicate a slight rise in salaries the following year.

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

The ideal number of pupils that a teacher can instruct has not been established. There has been a tendency since 1929 to increase the numbers in a teacher's charge. For Grand Forks County the range is from 35.7 to 14.5 pupils per teacher. The former figure is from the Grand Forks City schools, the latter the two-room school at Honeyford. Classified schools had a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:33.7, the consolidated schools a ratio of 1:25, and the rural schools an average of 1:15.4.

Table 7 lists these facts. The number of teachers, and the average monthly salary, the teacher-pupil ratio is listed for each of the five classified schools, the ten consolidated schools, the rural schools and the averages for each class.

Table 7

Number of Teachers, Salaries, and Teacher-Pupil Ratio for Different Classes of Schools in Grand Forks County 1934

Name and Class of Schcol	Number of Teachers Employed	Average Salary per Month	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
Classified:			
Grand Forks	103	$133.00	1:35.7
Larimore	12	108.00	1:27.8
Gilby	6	69.00	1:24.3
Northwood	8	90.00	1:32.6
Inkster	5	73.00	1:21.2
Average and Totals	134	94.60	1:33.7
Consolidated:			
Niagara	4	88.00	1:22
Emerado	4	85.00	1:24.3
Arvilla	2	85.00	1:39
Honeyford	2	65.00	1:14.5
Manvel	5	73.00	1:28.6
Johnstown	3	62.00	1:16
Mekinock	2	60.00	1:19.5
Thompson	5	84.00	1:33.4
Orr	3	82.00	1:23
Logan Center	4		1:31.3
Averages and Total of Consolidated Schools	34	76.00	1:25
Rural Schools:	102	51.61	1:15.4

Training of Teachers

While the salary paid a teacher, and the number of pupils under her charge are important, the training of the teacher is a large factor in indicating her efficiency in handling even a small group. Compilation of statistics shows that there is a greater difference in the training of teachers in the different classes of schools than on

any other point of comparison. In general the classified schools have far better trained teachers (Table 8), the consolidated schools much better than the rural schools. Training is indicated by number of years of normal or college training, and type of certificate held. In the classified schools all teachers hold professional certificates of either first or second grade. There are no teachers with elementary certificates in classified schools. Second grade elementary certificates are issued upon examination. First grade elementary certificates are issued on examination or on the completion of one year of normal training beyond high school. Teachers with elementary certificates are qualified to teach in the public schools of this state up to and including the eighth grade in any school in the state except in such schools which under rules of standardization require higher qualifications. Second grade professional certificates are issued upon completion of two years of Normal training, while first grade professional certificates are issued upon completion of four years of normal or college preparation. The classified schools have, therefore, one hundred per cent of teachers having professional certificates of the highest grade. Of the 134 teachers employed in the classified schools 94.7 per cent are college graduates.

Of the thirty-four teachers employed in the consolidated schools only one is listed with a first grade

elementary certificate. All the others have professional certificates. Fifty per cent of these teachers are college graduates, and would therefore, hold first grade professional certificates.

Of the 100 rural school teachers five hold second grade elementary certificates, fifty-seven hold first grade elementary certificates, thirty-eight hold professional certificates, of which two are first grade. Only two per cent of rural school teachers are college graduates.

Table 8

Training and Certification of Teachers of Grand Forks County for 1934

Name and Class of School	Number of Teachers Holding Second Elementary Certificates	Number of Teachers Holding First Elementary Certificates	Number of Teachers Holding Professional Certificates	Percentage of College Graduates
Classified:				
Grand Forks	0	0	103	100
Larimore	0	0	12	50
Gilby	0	0	6	50
Northwood	0	0	8	50
Inkster	0	0	5	40
Total and Average	0	0	134	94.7
Consolidated:				
Niagara	0	0	4	25
Emerado	0	0	4	50
Arvilla	0	0	2	
Honeyford	0	0	2	
Manvel	0	0	5	60
Johnstown	0	0	3	33

Table 8 (Continued)

Name and Class of School	Number of Teachers Holding Second Elementary Certificates	Number of Teachers Holding First Elementary Certificates	Number of Teachers Holding Professional Certificates	Percentage of College Graduates
Mekinock	0	1	1	
Thompson	0	0	5	60
Orr	0	0	3	100
Logan Center	0	0	4	100
Averages and Totals	0	0	33	50
Average of Rural Schools	5	57	38	2

School Libraries

One of the items reported to the county superintendent of schools by the school district clerks is the total number of books in the school library. Table 9 is a compilation of this data pertaining to school libraries in Grand Forks County.

Table 9

Library Books in Grand Forks County Schools

Name and Class of School	Number of Library Books in School	Library Books Per Pupil Enrolled
Classified Schools:		
Grand Forks	3419	.9
Larimore	400	1.2
Gilby	500	3.4
Northwood	440	1.7
Inkster	465	4.4
Total and Average	4224	.9
Consolidated Schools:		
Niagara	351	4.2
Emerado	783	8.0
Arvilla	340	4.3

Table 9 (Continued)

Name and Class of School	Number of Library Books in School	Library Books Per Pupil Enrolled
Honeyford	323	11.1
Manvel	960	6.7
Johnstown	476	7.4
Mekinock	255	6.5
Thompson	789	5.0
Orr	1000	14.4
Logan Center	900	10.0
Total and Average	6177	7.2
Rural Schools	12,171	7.7

Rather surprising comparisons can be noted in this table. The larger school units have much smaller libraries when figured on a per pupil basis. Classified schools averaged report nine-tenths library books per pupil, while consolidated schools report seven and two-tenths books per pupil. Even the rural schools with seven and seven-tenths books per pupil far outrank the larger schools.

There is a possible discrepancy in reporting these figures that may account for the differences. Classified schools, in reporting library conditions to the state department, are cautioned specifically to include only library books, leaving out all text books. It is quite possible that the smaller consolidated and rural schools report as library books all books on the shelves, which would include text books.

Whether or not this possible criticism of methods of reporting is justified, it still stands that library

facilities are of great importance. The State Department of Public Instruction is stressing more careful consideration of library problems. Of the six standards proposed by the State Department for High School libraries, only one was checked in this study. They propose a minimum standard of five library books per pupil. All the classified schools in Grand Forks County fall below this minimum. Most of the consolidated schools, and also the average rural school is above this minimum. If text books are included in their figures, many of the latter would also fail to meet the standard.

There is need for a standardization of methods of reporting school library data.

Summary

1. In 1934 the enrollment in all classified schools in Grand Forks County was 4,526, in consolidated school 849, and in rural schools 1,575.

2. Census enumeration has increased slightly over a twenty-five year period. Enrollment in the first eight grades has decreased slightly over the same period.

3. Over this twenty-five year period, enrollment in the first eight grades has decreased from 72.1 per cent to 53.9 per cent of enumeration.

4. The population of Grand Forks County is increasing slightly, the increase being confined to the city of Grand Forks. In the rural school districts enrollment

is only 57.7 per cent of enumeration. In consolidated school districts it is 90.1 per cent.

5. The birth rate has dropped from 23.5 per cent to 21.5 per cent per thousand of adult population over a ten-year period. The population of Grand Forks County is increasing slightly.

6. Grand Forks County employed 268 teachers in 1934, of which 134 were in classified schools, thirty-four in consolidated schools, and 102 in rural schools. Salaries paid averaged from $133.00 in Grand Forks city to $51.61 in the average of all rural schools.

7. The pupil-teacher ratio ranges from 35.7 to 14.5. It is the highest in Grand Forks city and lowest in Honeyford.

8. Classified schools have the best trained teachers, 94.7 per cent being college graduates. Fifty per cent of teachers in consolidated schools and two per cent of rural school teachers are college graduates.

9. The larger schools have larger libraries, but fewer books per pupil. Many schools fail to meet state department requirements for books per pupil. There is need for standardization of methods of reporting library data.

CHAPTER 4

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter will deal with financial considerations of the various schools of the county. It is commonly held that larger school units are more efficient than smaller ones. It may be possible to make comparisons from which conclusions may be drawn. Comparisons of effort, valuations per child, ability to pay for school facilities, indebtedness, and other topics will be presented.

Averaging all Rural Schools

In presenting financial tables of expenditures and other data for the schools of Grand Forks County, it will be necessary to average the figures for rural schools. Since there are a total of 103 districts in the county, eighty-eight of which are rural school districts, it is evident that tables listing all districts would be cumbersome. Aside from the physical impracticability there is the fact of a certain uniformity in most of the rural schools that makes it unnecessary to list them all. The average of all should present fairly the picture of any one of the group, at least it would be a fair representation.

To determine whether the average of all rural schools differs materially from a smaller sampling, ten districts were picked at random from the list of eighty-eight and their expenditures listed for general control,

instructional service, ausiliary agencies, operation, maintenance, fixed charges, outlay, and debt service. The sampled group is below the average (Table 10) for most of these items. There is quite a range of differences, but it does not seem that they are important enough to warrant listing them all in tables that would be so long that comparisons would be difficult to make. It might seem to a casual observer that there are districts in the rural school group too large to be grouped with the others. However, these larger districts consist of two or three one-room rural schools. The only sense in which they are larger units is in the fact that one board manages them.

It would be interesting to make a detailed comparison within this rural school group to see if there is any economy in the large units, but as pointed out it will be necessary to leave out such comparisons in this study.

Table 10

Comparison of the Expenditures of a Sampling of Ten Rural Schools of Grand Forks County Compared with the Average of all Rural Schools for the Year 1934

District Number	General Control	Instructional Service	Auxiliary Agencies	Operation	Maintenance	Fixed Charges	Outlay	Debt Service
2	$61.00	$621.00	$160.00	$47.00	$29.00	$23.00	$	
10	59.00	641.00	400.00	87.00	24.00	32.00	6.00	
23	62.00	468.00	230.00	95.00		21.00		
32	74.00	595.00	115.00	54.00	19.00	28.00	20.00	
46	54.00	170.00	83.00					
58	57.00	465.00	360.00	69.00	2.00	10.00		
69	29.00	375.00	70.00	36.00	12.00	96.00		
81	52.00	409.00	354.00	96.00	4.00	16.00		
92	44.00	450.00	36.00	72.00	153.00	24.00		35.00
109	74.00	543.00	108.00	109.00	8.00	23.00		
Average Above Ten	57.00	474.00	192.00	67.00	25.00	27.00	3.00	4.00
Average of All Rural	81.00	768.00	242.00	122.00	33.00	25.00	53.00	59.00

Income of School Districts

All school district income can be classified under six headings. The state tuition fund is apportioned to schools on a basis of school census. The source of this fund is fines and penalties imposed for violation of state laws, leasing of school land, and interest and income from the permanent school fund of the state. Another source is the county tuition fund. Its source is a $1.00 poll tax paid by adults, and a one-half mill levy on the entire

valuation of the county. It is apportioned on a basis of school census. State aid was apportioned to high schools by the state department from a direct appropriation of the legislature as a condition to meeting standards set up by the department. It was discontinued in 1934 as a result of the failure of the legislature to provide the revenue. Federal aid as it is known in this study refers to aid to schools maintaining Smith-Hughes departments, rather than relief offered during the year 1934-1935. The Smith-Hughes plan is that of matching funds by federal, state, and local units.

Receipts from taxes levied on real and personal property within the local school district has constituted the large source of school revenue. Miscellaneous receipts complete the list of sources of school revenue.

Table 11gives the sources and amounts of school revenue to school districts of the county averaged for the years 1932, 1933, and 1934. By far the larger amounts are received from taxes. Indeed that has been the principal reason for the stress evident in schools the past few years. Shrinkage in revenue from this source due to sharp reductions in valuations of real and personal property, and lowering of the basis of assessment from seventy-five to fifty per cent, has handicapped all schools. Although this process has been very severe, even tragic, it may eventually prove a boon, for attention has been called to the dire need for a wider basis of financial support.

Although not included in this survey, the state equalization fund is already pouring in additional revenue. Other plans to widen still further the basis of support are growing out of the past situation where personal and real property owners carried the big share of the burden.

Table 11

Ordinary Income in Dollars of School Districts of Grand Forks County. Average of Three Years 1932, 1933, and 1934

District and Classification	Sources of Income: State Apportionment	County Tuition	State Aid	Smith-Hughes	Taxes	Other	Total Receipts
Classified:							
Grand Forks	13,707	12,942	495	626	161,318	8,774	197,862
Larimore	1,170	1,058	900	*	15,432	3,316	21,876
Gilby	420	355	133		5,515	587	7,010
Northwood	668	561	354		8,788	3,332	13,703
Inkster	363	371	133		6,261	473	7,601
Average	3,266	3,055	748		39,463	3,296	49,610
Consolidated:							
Niagara	180	185	217		3,839	934	5,355
Emerado	329	232	217		4,338	407	5,423
Arvilla	237	216	75		1,797	574	2,899
Honeyford	103	97	72		2,157	239	2,668
Manvel	426	389	217		5,884	602	7,518
Johnstown	114	101	217		4,707	327	5,466
Mekinock	190	170	35		1,911	90	2,396
Thompson	555	503	275		7,631	589	9,553
Orr	178	161	181		3,150	760	4,430
Logan Center	306	278	217		5,894	598	7,293
Average	252	232	172		4,131	512	5,300
Average of all Rural Schools	92	84			996	51	1,223

*Received $1,073.00 Smith-Hughes aid in 1932; none in 1933; and $16,112.00 in 1934, part of which was PWA building money.

To show the situation in percentages, Table 12 has been compiled. The most noticeable fact in this table is that mentioned previous to Table 11, namely that schools are too dependent on local tax revenue. The larger units are slightly favored in this respect. The classified schools get 75.5 per cent of their revenue from taxes, while the consolidated schools get seventy-seven per cent, from this source. Rural schools are still more dependent on local revenue, the percentage being 81.4.

The small units that comprise the rural school districts have by far the narrowest basis of financial support. They get a proportionate share of the state and county tuition funds, but receive no state aid, which is paid only to high schools. They have no way of making use of the possibility of getting federal support to Smith-Hughes departments. Then, too, they pay out rather than receive money listed under "other receipts" in the form of tuition to or from other districts.

Table 12

Ordinary Income by Percentages for School Districts of Grand Forks

District and Classification	Sources of Income: State Apportionment	County Tuition	State Aid	Smith-Hughes	Taxes	Other Receipts
Classified:						
Grand Forks	7.0%	6.5%	.3%	.3%	81.5%	4.4%
Larimore	5.3	4.8	4.1	*	70.6	15.2
Gilby	6.0	5.0	2.0		79.0	8.0
Northwood	4.9	4.1	2.6		64.1	24.3
Inkster	4.8	4.9	1.7		82.4	6.2
Average	5.6	5.1	2.1	.1	75.5	11.6
Consolidated:						
Niagara	3.3	3.5	4.0		71.7	17.5
Emerado	4.2	4.3	4.0		80.0	7.5
Arvilla	8.2	7.4	2.6		62.0	19.8
Honeyford	3.9	3.6	2.7		80.8	9.0
Manvel	5.6	5.2	2.9		78.3	8.0
Johnstown	2.1	1.8	4.0		86.1	6.0
Mekinock	7.9	7.1	1.4		79.9	3.7
Thompson	5.8	5.3	2.8		79.9	6.2
Orr	4.1	3.6	4.1		71.1	17.7
Logan Center	4.2	3.8	3.0		80.8	8.2
Average	4.9	4.6	3.2		77.0	10.3
Average of All Rural Schools	7.6	6.8			81.4	4.2

*$1,073.00 received for Smith-Hughes work, and $16,112.00 Federal Aid including S.M. not included in percentages.

School District Expenditures

School district expenditures are classified under eight headings: general control, instructional service, auxiliary agencies, operation, maintenance, fixed charges, outlay, and debt service. A brief summary is hereby given of the items ordinarily included under each heading. General control includes salaries and expenses of school

officers, and salaries of the superintendent in the larger systems. Under instructional service is included expenditures for teachers salaries, supplies such as paper, chalk, textbooks, library books. Auxiliary agencies includes principally transportation expenses. Wages of the janitor, fuel, water, and supplies for cleaning, toilet supplies, are included under the heading of operation of the plant. Maintenance includes all expenditures made for repairing buildings and equipment, but not for alterations or improvements. Payments of warrants and orders of the preceeding year are indicated under the heading fixed charges. Outlay is the purchase of land, new buildings, improvement of grounds, new equipment, and alteration of old buildings. By debt service is meant expenditures for meeting bond issues, and interest on bonds.

For the purpose of comparing expenditures of schools of Grand Forks County, Table 13 is listed. The districts are listed in order of the size of their total expenditures. There is an enormous difference noted from the largest to the smallest unit. Grand Forks City, the largest unit, has a total expenditure of $333,000.00, while the average rural school representing the smallest unit, has an expenditure of $849.00. From this standpoint the largest unit is over 390 times as large as the smallest.

The total expenditures of all schools for general control amounts to $13,691.65 a year. For any one School

the item is not large, but in the aggregate, it is a large amount. Each school district officer legally draws a compensation of $8.00 per year, with an extra allowance of one dollar per meeting attended in the case of graded schools. The clerk of the board receives such compensation as is fixed by the board, not to exceed $50.00 per year in common school districts. The treasurer is allowed a compensation of one per cent of all moneys paid out of the school district treasury, with a minimum of ten dollars, and a maximum of thirty dollars.[1]

It would seem that there would be some economy in an administrative system of a county-wide nature. A County Board of Education would serve without pay except for actual time and expense while in attendance at meetings. They would appoint a superintendent but the salary of that officer would not need to be considered as coming out of the figure mentioned above, for the salary is now paid to the county superintendent out of the general fund of the county. We could expect a saving of close to $10,000.00 on general control alone by having the county schools administered from one head.

[1] General School Laws, State of North Dakota, 1935, Sections 99, 101, 109.

Table 13

Expenditures in Dollars by Districts in Grand Forks County in Order of Their Size, Years 1932, 1933 and 1934 Averaged

District	General Control	Instructional Service	Auxiliary Agencies	Operation	Maintenance	Fixed	Outlay	Debt Service
Grand Forks	$ 4,057	$ 175,903	$ 2,283	$ 33,936	$ 3,222	$ 4,395	$ 66,935	$ 41,819
Larimore	468	17,955	247	3,151	347	270	1,684	
Northwood	343	10,212	9	1,998	200	280	270	
Gilby	99	6,182	1,323	1,755	144	108	29	1,543
Inkster	179	4,843	356	1,794	252	235		3
Thompson	142	6.228	147	1,508	328	498	88	210
Manvel	151	4,780	1,191	1,125	808	223	6	
Logan Center	113	3,842	1,188	847	247	195	186	610
Niagara	139	4.679	431	974	83	169	85	
Johnstown	217	3,189	1,193	808	140	193	14	
Arvilla	186	3,489	398	919	226	329		2
Emerado	139	3,955	97	848	181	93	25	
Orr	122	2,903	509	774	175	121	17	
Honeyford	103	1,541	438	368	37	7		
Mekinock	126	1,140	326	260	21	43		
Average of Rural Schools*	81	768	242	123	33	25	53	59

*By taking total of all rural schools divided by eighty-eight.

Expenditures by Percentages

Some interesting comparisons are possible when the table of expenditures by districts is transferred into a table of expenditures by percentages (Table 14).

Table 14

Expenditures in Percentage for School Districts of Grand Forks County, North Dakota in Order of Their Size

Years 1932, 1933, and 1934 Averaged

District	General Control	Instructional Service	Auxiliary Agencies	Operation	Maintenance	Fixed	Outlay	Debt Service
Grand Forks	1.2%	52.9%	.7%	10.2%	1.0%	1.3%	20.1%	12.6%
Larimore	1.9	74.4	1.0	13.1	1.5	1.2	6.9	
Northwood	2.6	78.7	.1	15.0	1.5	2.1	2.0	
Gilby	.9	35.3	11.8	15.7	1.3	1.0	.2	13.8
Inkster	2.3	63.2	4.7	23.4	3.3	3.1		
Thompson	1.5	68.1	1.6	16.5	3.6	5.4	1.0	2.3
Manvel	1.8	57.7	14.4	13.6	9.7	2.7	.1	
Logan Center	1.7	53.2	16.3	11.7	3.4	2.7	3.6	8.4
Niagara	2.1	71.3	6.6	14.9	1.3	2.6	1.2	
Johnstown	3.8	55.4	20.8	14.1	3.4	3.3	.2	
Arvilla	3.4	64.0	7.3	16.9	4.2	4.2		
Emerado	2.6	74.8	1.6	15.9	3.4	1.2	.5	
Orr	2.7	62.8	11.0	16.7	3.8	2.6	.4	
Honeyford	4.2	61.8	17.6	14.7	1.5	.2		
Mekinock	6.8	59.5	17.0	13.6	1.1	2.2		
Average of Rural Schools	5.8	55.7	17.6	8.8	2.3	1.8	3.8	4.2

In general, the smaller schools expend a larger percentage of their budget for general control than do the larger schools. The average rural school, representing the smallest unit expends 5.8 per cent, while all the others averaged, expend 2.6 per cent for this item.

The per cent/age expended for instructional service ranged from 52.9 per cent to 76.7 per cent. Schools that have heavy expenditures for outlay, debt service, or transportation have the lowest percentage of expenditures for instructional service, which is largely teachers' salaries. This does not indicate, however, that individual salaries are lower. The significance of the figures lies in the fact that many schools expend only slightly over one-half of their expenditures for this highly important phase of the educational set-up.

Seven schools, Gilby, Manvel, Logan Center, Johnstown, Orr, Honeyford, and Mekinock have heavy expenditures for transportation. So their percentage of expenditure for auxiliary agencies is large, the range being from 11.8 per cent to 20.8 per cent. This is also true of the average rural school, while two other schools, Niagara and Arvilla have comparatively large figures.

Under operation, maintenance, and fixed charges, the percentage of expenditures are fairly uniform for all schools. Great differences are noted, however, in the figures for outlay, and debt service.

Ability to Support Education

There is a quite prevalent notion that rural school districts are poverty stricken and are, therefore, unable to offer anything but the most meagre school facilities. Figures giving wealth per census child (Table 15) shows that this is not the case in Grand Forks County. Only

four districts have higher valuations per child than the average rural school and these four are small town schools.

This table of striking figures shows the valuation in dollars, the census enumeration, and the valuation per child for fifteen consolidated, graded, and classified schools of the county. The richest and poorest, as well as the average rural school district is also included in this table. By the richest district is meant the one with the largest total valuation and by the poorest district is meant the one showing the lowest valuation. The school districts are listed in order of their valuation per census child.

Table 15

Valuation* in Dollars, Enumeration, and Valuation Per Child for Grand Forks County Schools, 1934

District	Valuation	Enumeration	Valuation Per Child
Honeyford	302,514	40	7563
Johnstown	448,001	60	7468
Best Rural District*	530,986	92	5771
Arvilla	470,538	89	5287
Poorest Rural District**	47,664	10	4766
Orr	285,795	61	4685
Average Rural District	136,519	31	4403
Emerado	374,929	90	4165
Niagara	305,040	78	3901
Logan Center	266,428	108	2467
Gilby	400,207	170	2354
Inkster	277,624	120	2313
Thompson	430,306	195	2207
Mecinock	126,525	58	2181
Larimore	827,192	400	2088
Manvel	305,852	163	1870
Northwood	395,175	243	1626
Grand Forks	7,991,378	5,074	1275

*Fifty per cent valuation

Varying from $7563.00 to $1275.00, the valuations per child show a terrific difference in potentital ability of the districts to support education. It was pointed out elsewhere that approximately eighty per cent of school revenue is from local sources. This being the case, we might expect school districts having large valuations per child taking the lead by way of furnishing adequate school facilities. A study of the table does not seem to bear out this conclusion. This is especially true if we remember that the portion of this survey on curricular offerings, pointed out that the schools listed as having the lowest valuations per census child have the most complete educational offerings. The classified schools are all in the lower half of this table, Grand Forks being at the bottom. If a table of mill levies were superimposed over Table 15, it would show a tendency for districts of high valuation to have low mill levies. The inherent efficiency of the larger units making possible more complete educational opportunities in spite of lower valuations per child plus the greater effort made by these same districts, accounts for the fact that educational leadership is divorced from wealth in Grand Forks County.

A graphic representation of the same conditions is shown in Figure 6.

	1 38
Honeyford	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Johnstown	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Richest Rural	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Arvilla	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Poorest Rural	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Orr	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Average Rural	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Emerado	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Niagara	$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Logan Center	$$$$$$$$$$$$
Gilby	$$$$$$$$$$$
Inkster	$$$$$$$$$$
Thompson	$$$$$$$$$$
Mekinock	$$$$$$$$$$
Larimore	$$$$$$$$$
Manvel	$$$$$$$$
Northwood	$$$$$$$
Grand Forks	$$$$$$

$ Equals $200.00

Figure 6

Wealth Per Census Child in Schools of Grand Forks County

Comparison of Effort

Since over eighty per cent of school revenue in Grand Forks County is raised locally (within the district), a comparison of school district levies will show the comparative effort that districts are making to support their schools. This is especially true when the tax rate in mills is compared. Eight schools have levied the legal limit or are within a fraction of a mill of that figure (Table 18). They are the five classified schools, Grand Forks, Larimore, Gilby, Northwood, Inkster, and two consolidated schools, Manvel and Mekinock. Thompson with sixteen mill levy is also close to the limit of local effort. Up to the year 1934, no schools have voted to raise the legal limit of the levy.

When the tax levy in dollars is divided by the school enrollment, the figure called tax levy per capita is obtained. In many cases schools that have a comparatively low mill rate have comparatively large per capita levies. Thus, Johnstown has only a ten mill levy for general purposes, and seven mills for interest and sinking fund, making a total of $121.15 per capita levy, while Grand Forks, with eighteen and six mills, has only a $48.95 per capita tax levy. The number of pupils enrolled makes a striking difference in tax levies per capita. In general, the larger units are more efficient, having a lower tax levy when the number of children served is considered.

Rural schools average $65.28 per pupil for general tax levy.

Table 15

Tax Rate in Nearest Whole Mille and Tax Levy Per Child Enrolled for Schools of Grand Forks County 1934

District	Tax Levy in Nearest Whole Mill		Tax Levy Per Child Enrolled	
	General	Interest and Sinking Fund	General	Interest and Sinking Fund
Grand Forks	18	6	35.47	13.48
Larimore	18		44.88	
Gilby	17	10	46.22	26.04
Northwood	17		24.86	
Inkster	18		47.14	
Niagara	10		51.56	
Arvilla	10		57.73	
Honeyford	8		86.27	
Manvel	18		38.50	
Johnstown	10	7	70.34	50.81
Mekinock	18		58.41	
Thompson	16		45.14	
Orr	13	1	52.63	3.60
Logan Center	18	6	53.28	18.35
Average of Rural Schools	10	.4	65.28	3.64

Indebtedness of School Districts

Indebtedness of school districts consists of bonded debt, certificates of indebtedness and outstanding warrants. When confronted with a building problem, a board of education usually finds it necessary to borrow money. The tax payers have a say through their vote, so a bond issue is considered to be the result of an expression of a sentiment for good educational facilities.

Certificates of indebtedness are legally issued when a board finds it necessary to borrow money because taxes already levied have not been paid. They are issued against

delinquent taxes for current expenses, and while secured by such delinquent taxes are a general obligation of the district. Outstanding warrants are usually registered warrants that have not been paid for want of funds.

A large portion of the indebtedness of the County is in the city of Grand Forks. The indebtedness of this district in 1934 was $434,000.00. Other schools with considerable indebtedness are Larimore, Gilby, and Johnstown. Since this date Northwood has bonded to carry out a building program. One classified school district and seven consolidated districts have no bonded debt. Very few rural schools have any outstanding bonds, but all together have $34,750.00 of outstanding bonds which averages $394.88 for each school. These facts are shown in Table 17. Bonded debt per capita for each school district and the percentage that bonded debt is of valuation is shown in Table 18. In calculating the latter, the 100 per cent valuation is used. All districts having bonded debt are well below the legal limit of five per cent of the valuation.

Table 17

Indebtedness of School Districts of Grand Forks County As of June 30, 1934

District	Bonds Outstanding	Certificates of Indebtedness	Balance in Interest and Sinking Fund	Warrants Outstanding
Grand Forks	$399,000.00	$35,000.00		$ 43.00
Larimore	60,000.00		$ 628.00	412.00
Gilby	30,000.00	3,000.00	3,855.00	1,840.00
Northwood			1,162.00	
Inkster				
Total	489,000.00	38,000.00	5.645.00	2,295.00
Niagara			57.00	39.00
Emerado				
Arvilla				9.00
Honeyford				
Manvel				
Johnstown	22,000.00		1,506.00	
Mekinock				
Thompson			900.00	
Orr	2,500.00		1,152.00	
Logan Center	9,835.00	1,600.00	1,611.00	
Total	34,335.00	1,600.00	5,226.00	
Total of all Rural Schools	34,750.00	14,698.00	11,033.00	5,185.00
Average of Rural Schools	394.88	167.00	126.00	59.00

Table 18

Debt per Student Enrolled and Percentage Bonded Debt is of One Hundred Per Cent Valuation As of June 30, 1934

District	Per Capita Debt	Percentage That Bonded Debt is of Valuation
Grand Forks	$ 108.00	2.5%
Larimore	180.00	3.6
Gilby	205.00	3.7
Northwood		

Table 18 (Continued)

District	Per Capita Debt	Percentage That Bonded Debt is of Valuation
Inkster		
Niagara		
Emerado		
Arvilla		
Honeyford		
Manvel		
Johnstown	$ 344.00	2.4
Mekinock		
Thompson		
Orr	36.00	.5
Logan Center	109.00	.2
Average of Rural Schools	22.00	.2

Trend in Bonded Debt

In 1922 the per capita debt was $56.10 and it has increased quite uniformly until 1935 when it was $81.20.

Be debt per capita is meant the debt per student enrolled. It is calculated by dividing the total bonded debt of the county by the total enrollment.

Since 1922, figures are available in school district clerk's reports to the county superintendent on bonded debt. A thirteen-year trend is shown in Table 19 for all schools of the county. The total bonded debt is divided by the number of students enrolled in all the schools to obtain "debt per capita." Since 1922 the total bonded debt has increased from $341,300.000 to $555,085.00 in 1934, and to $565,041.00 in 1935. The latter figure is the largest total ever reached.

Table 19

Trend in Bonded Debt of Schools in

Grand Forks County

Year	Total Bonded Debt of All Schools	Total Enrollment of All Schools	Debt Per Capita in Dollars
1922	$341,300.00	6,083	$56.10
1923	367,750.00	6,318	58.20
1924	388,150.00	6,341	61.20
1925	368,550.00	6,277	58.70
1926	383,950.00	6,284	61.10
1927	505,250.00	6,316	79.90
1928	506,200.00	6,410	78.90
1929	448,900.00	6,735	66.60
1930	437,567.00	6,522	67.10
1931	393,717.00	6,703	58.70
1932	543,535.00	6,766	80.30
1933	526,585.00	6,701	78.60
1934	555,085.00	6,950	79.80
1935	565,041.00	6,956	81.20

Per Pupil Costs

Since 1929 school revenues have fallen off very materially. This fact has made it necessary to scrutinize very carefully the matter of school expenditures. For the purpose of making comparisons among schools such expenditures are best standardized on a per pupil basis. There are four commonly accepted bases for such calculations, namely census enumeration, enrollment, attendance, and average daily attendance. Of these average daily attendance is accepted as the most desirable unit.[1] However, since figures were not available in this study for average daily attendance, per pupil costs will be made on an enrollment basis.

[1] Engelhardt and Engelhardt, Public School Business Administration, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College (Columbia University), p. 783.

What may such cost comparisons indicate? What facts should we look for in cost comparisons? Should per pupil costs be high or low? In attempting to answer these questions it seems there is a complication of factors. Very plainly, if the figures are low, they may indicate either desirable economy in administration, or they may indicate miserly effort. If the figures are high they may point to lack of efficiency in one case and generous efforts to maintain school facilities in another case. All these possibilities are noted in the compilation of cost per pupil enrolled as shown by the figures for Grand Forks County (Table 20).

This table lists per pupil costs under four headings: total expenditures of the district, total expenditures except debt service, expenditures for instructional service, and expenditures for operation of the plant. The schools are arranged in order of their enrollment to allow of comparisons between the various sized units.

Table 20

Cost Per Pupil Enrolled for Certain Selected Expenditures of Schools in Grand Forks County 1934

Schools Arranged in Order of Enrollment	Cost Per Pupil Enrolled For Total Expenditures	For All Expenditures Except Debt Service	For Instructional Service	For Operation of Plant
Grand Forks	$79.42	$79.42	$36.22	$9.22
Larimore	72.22	72.22	43.66	9.43
Northwood	51.00	51.00	24.48	7.65
Thompson	58.27	58.27	32.80	9.54
Gilby	76.67	76.67	30.27	12.00
Manvel	57.92	57.92	26.25	7.86
Inkster	71.90	71.90	31.41	16.92
Emerado	55.03	55.03	34.77	8.75
Logan Center	80.31	73.53	31.47	9.41
Niagara	79.03	79.03	37.35	11.73
Arvilla	69.86	69.86	30.50	11.78
Orr	66.96	66.96	31.63	11.22
Johnstown	89.90	89.90	31.14	12.62
Mekinock	49.13	49.13	24.36	6.66
Honeyford	86.00	86.00	39.94	12.68
Average Rural School	77.30	73.93	26.09	6.85

Per pupil costs as shown in the first column, does not show any consistent economy on the part of the larger units. In fact, the largest unit, Grand Forks City, has very nearly the same figure as the average rural school, the figures being $79.42 and $77.30, respectively. The extreme range of costs in this column is from $49.13 to $89.90, both of which happen to be small school units. Larimore and Northwood, comparable in size, have costs of $72.22 and $51.00, respectively.

Comparisons in column three of this table show costs per pupil enrolled for instructional service. Ever since Mark Andrews and the boy sat on the classical log, instructional service has been regarded as the most essential school expenditure. The range of figures is from $43.66 to $26.09, without any apparent relation to the size of the unit. Individually by schools, costs for teaching service might be interpreted as high, owing to either low teacher-pupil ratio or fairly liberal salary allowances to instructors. If they are low it may be due to high pupil-teacher ratio, or low salaries. It seems that we must include other factors with cost figures to secure any worthwhile interpretation. Rural schools have the lowest cost of operation, but in general the larger units have lower costs in this respect. The larger units furnish more modern facilities of heat, light, ventilation, and sanitation. It is quite evident that there is considerable economy in operating larger school units in Grand Forks County.

The fact that the larger schools employ teachers with higher qualifications, pay them better salaries, offer a more enriched curriculum, and provide better physical facilities without increasing per pupil costs, points to their inherent efficiency.

Summary

1. Financial comparisons are facilitated by averaging all rural schools.

2. About eighty per cent of school district income in Grand Forks County is from local taxation. Larger units have a broader basis of income than the smaller units.

3. School district expenditures for general control (mostly school officers salaries) amounted to $13,691.65 in 1934. Smaller schools, in general, expend a greater percentage for general control than larger schools. In some schools, the percentage of expenditures for instructional service is largely affected by heavy expenditures for outlay, debt service, and transportation.

4. Rural school districts of Grand Forks County are not impoverished. They have greater wealth per child than city districts. The variation in wealth per child is from $7,563.00 in the Honeyford district to $1,275.00 in Grand Forks City.

5. In general, schools with lowest valuations per census child make the greatest effort and maintain the best facilities. The tax levy per child enrolled is much lower in the larger districts than in the small ones.

6. Seven out of fifteen classified and consolidated schools have bonded debt. All are well below the legal limit of five per cent of the valuation. Bonded debt is steadily increasing in the county, having reached an all time high in 1935.

7. Per pupil costs have no apparent relation to the size of the unit. The fact that the largest city districts have no larger per pupil costs while employing better

qualified teachers, offering a more enriched curriculum, and providing better physical facilities, points to their inherent efficiency.

CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

The transportation problem demands careful consideration in an agricultural county where population is sparse and where distances between farm homes and schools are comparatively great.

It will be the purpose in this chapter to point out how the transportation problem is related to the present set-up of schools, and to the future possibility of a more centralized system.

Brief History of the Transportation Problem

Early consolidation laws provided that payment should be made from general school funds to families living more than a specified distance from school. The minimum distance for which transportation may now legally be paid is two miles. The principle back of this portion of the consolidation law was to compensate taxpayers somewhat for the added expense they were to assume in becoming a portion of a district where taxes would necessarily be higher. This original principle has been followed during the years that schools have operated under the principle of consolidation. There has been a tendency, however, to narrow the payment for transportation somewhat. It is now optional[1] with the board of districts not known as "consolidated districts" whether they pay for transportation.

[1] General School Laws of North Dakota (1935), Sec. 651, 652.

This includes most rural schools, and some independent and special districts.

Schools Have Heavy Transportation Costs

Expenditures by districts, in dollars, for "auxiliary agencies," the percentage of expenditures for auxiliary agencies, and the average amount paid per pupil for transportation, is shown in Table 21.

Table 21

Expenditures of Districts for "Auxiliary Agencies," and Average Expenditures Per Pupil for Transportation in Grand Forks County.

District	Expenditures For Auxiliary Agencies	Percentage of Expenditures for Auxiliary Agencies	Average Amount Paid for Transportation Per Pupil
Grand Forks	$2,283.00	.7%	$
Larimore	247.00	1.0	23.00
Gilby	1,323.00	11.8	28.00
Northwood	9.00	.1	
Inkster	356.00	4.7	
Niagara	431.00	6.6	29.00
Emerado	97.00	1.6	12.00
Arvilla	398.00	7.3	17.00
Honeyford	438.00	17.7	13.00
Manvel	1,191.00	14.4	29.00
Johnstown	1,193.00	20.8	37.00
Mekinock	326.00	17.0	18.00
Thompson	147.00	1.6	
Orr	509.00	11.0	20.00
Logan Center	1,188.00	16.3	11.00
Average of Rural Schools	242.00	17.6	5.60

Eleven out of fifteen Grand Forks County schools above the one-room rural class pay out considerable amounts for transportation. The column "expenditures for auxiliary

agencies" includes amounts paid for transportation. For many districts transportation expenditures is the only item in this column. When expressed as percentage of total expenditures, seven schools pay out over ten per cent for auxiliary agencies. One school pays out twenty per cent of their total expenditures for transportation. Rural schools average over seventeen per cent of expenditures for this item. There is considerable difference in the average amount paid per pupil for transportation. Four school districts, Grand Forks, Thompson, Northwood, and Inkster, paid out no transportation money in 1934. Of these having transportation costs, Logan Center had the lowest average per pupil expenditure of $11.00. Johnstown had the highest, the amount being $37.00. Factors affecting the amount paid per pupil are, average distances to school, amount paid bus drivers when the bus system is used, and the number of pupils transported.

Two contributing factors add materially to the complexity of the transportation problems. First, severe winter weather making travel difficult, and second, the road and highway situation. As far as the weather is concerned, we are still in the situation we were when Mark Twain said "We talk about the weather, but do nothing about it." Lacking control of this factor, we must seek an approach through the second factor.

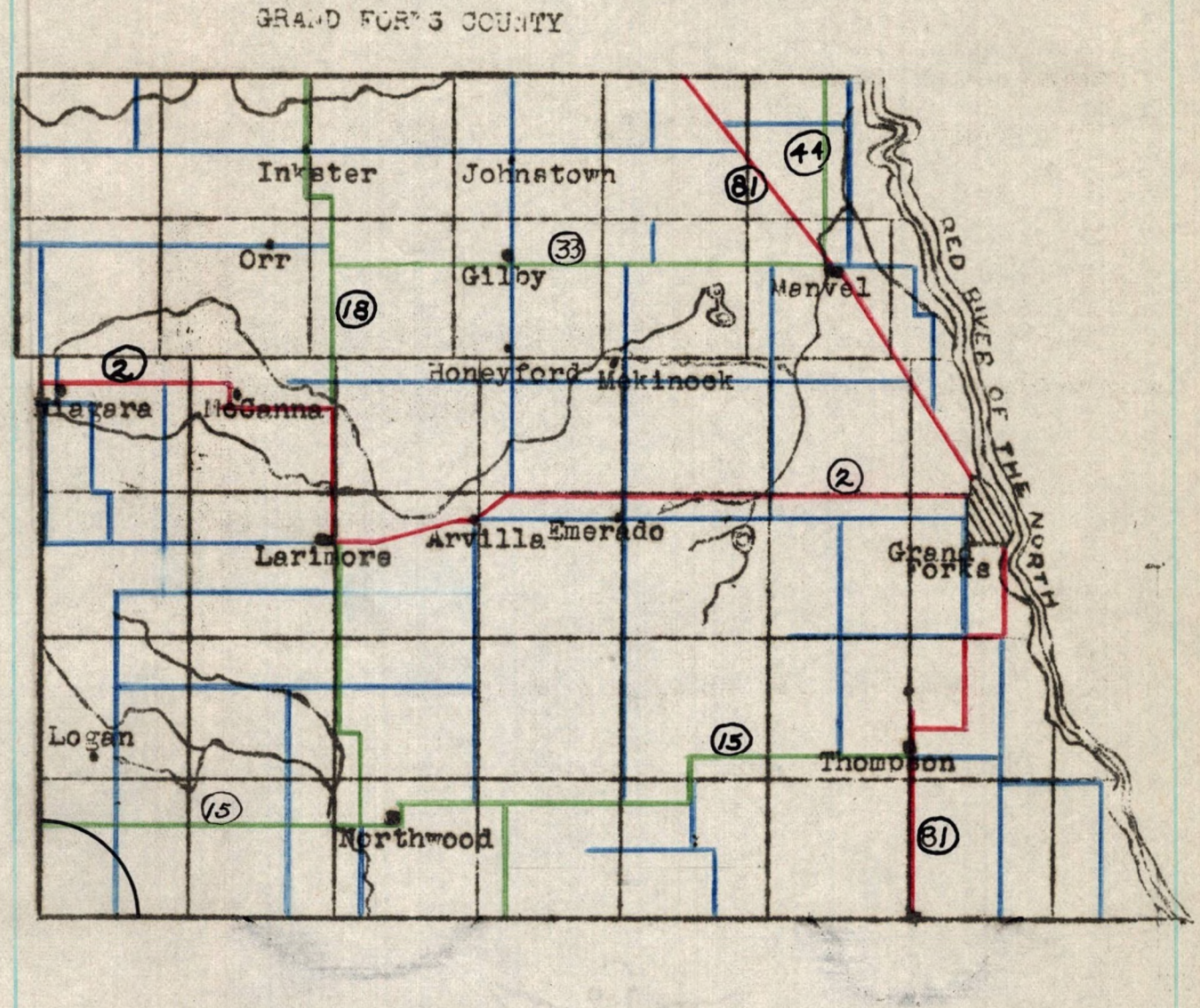
Since 1908, when consolidation of many districts was effected, the means of transportation have improved.

The gradual construction and improvement of a highway system has made possible the use of power vehicles on more and more of the transportation lines. At the present time Grand Forks County's 218 miles of state highways and some 340 miles of county and township highways are a very materail aid in transporting children to and from schools.

Importance of the Highway Problem

If we are contemplating further centralization of school units, with an accompanying intensification of the transportation problem, we cannot ignore the highway situation. What is the future of the highway situation? When will the roads and highways make it possible to transport children greater distances? In order to make this discussion of the transportation more complete, and at least open the matter up for discussion and thought, a review of some of the facts and problems of the North Dakota State Highway situation is presented here.

Construction of roads and highways has been a joint effort of township, county, state, and federal agencies. Actual construction of North Dakota State highways began in 1919 when the first Federal Aid project was completed. Since that time about 7,000 miles have been built and a considerable portion surface-graveled. The Federal Aid Act permitted a state to include in its Federal Aid System seven-tenths per cent of all the roads in the state. This allowed North Dakota a maximum mileage of about 7,500 miles of such highways. We have, therefore, very



Map 5

Highway System

Federal highways are in red, state highways in green, and county highways in blue.

nearly reached the limit of State Highway construction. Any further construction must be at the expense of either the county, township, or the state acting outside the Federal Aid Act--a condition which is not contemplated.

Recent development of a policy,[2] as far as it is possible to crystallize a definite, permanent policy, by the State Highway Department, points to the fact that North Dakota is approaching a new era of road construction. Principal facts to be considered are:

1. North Dakota's state highway system of some 7,000 miles is more than three times the average of other states of the Unites States, when figured on a population basis. This state has one mile for each eighty-nine of population, while there are about 289 people in the United States for each mile of state highways in the total of all the state systems.

2. We pay gasoline tax and license fees for the upkeep of these highways far below the average of other states. In fact, we are at the bottom of the list of states for average total tax per automobile, including license fees, gas tax, and personal property tax. The average for the United States is $36.36 per car, and for North Dakota the average is $21.49.

3. At the present time there are 1,021 miles of North Dakota state highways classed by the Bureau of

[2] State Highway Department, Bismarck, North Dakota (J. N. Roherty, Research Engineer). Data compiled for Transportation Committee of State Planning Board.

Public Roads as "unsatisfactory" as to maintenance. Present receipts will not allow of any new building, but must be used for maintenance or our huge investment of some $133,000,000.00 in all kinds of highways will be lost through deterioration.

4. There are two general lines of attack to our problem: (1) raise more funds or (2) drop the roads that do not pay for their upkeep from our State Highway System. It is estimated that at least sixty per cent of our entire State Highway System is a system of farm to market roads and that the allocation of Congress for roads of this latter type is being spent in this state for roads that are of too little importance to justify the expenditures they entail.

5. Demand for all weather roads has since 1917 forced the policy of building a large mileage of cheap roads, rather than shorter stretches of a more permanent type of construction. As a result we have 7,069.3 miles of earth grade of which 6,410.7 are surfaced with gravel, 432.4 are surfaced with oil mix, and 55.1 are paved. The comparatively small amounts of mileage of a permanent nature, that is oil mix and paving, and the consequent high upkeep cost of the cheaper construction is our principal problem.

6. The State Highway Department plans the construction of higher roadbeds with less ditch to prevent

drifting of snow on the highways during the winter. This type of construction, when surfaced with a permanent surface will lower maintenance costs both during summer and winter. Sums now expended for winter snow removal will be saved, and in time will gradually enable us to work out the present problem of high maintenance.

What has all this to do with the transportation problem of Grand Forks County? Simply that the county is a part of the state, and will be affected by permanent policies of the State Highway Department. It looks as though we cannot expect an extension of the state highway system in this county. Indeed, if some of the mileage is dropped from the main system by the highway department, we can expect that some of those within the county will be dropped.

Improvement of highways within the county that will make greater centralization of schools possible must come largely from the townships and the county. At the present time approximately seventy-five miles of earth grade is being built each year by a co-operative effort of the townships and county governments. Of the 340 miles of roads of this type, very few miles are graveled. They become heavy in rainy weather, but being higher than the adjoining land, are fairly passable in winter. They are not maintained to as high a standard as state highways, although considerable money is spent on maintenance.

While we have made remarkable progress in the development of our highways in the past fifteen years (some say more than we can afford), it seems that it will be some years before we have a system that will be dependable enough in all weather to warrant extension of present transportation routes very materially. Transportation will be a limiting factor in centralization for some time to come. More will be said about this in the following chapter of recommendations.

Summary

1. Payment of school funds for transportation of children to school was a part of the early consolidation law.

2. Many schools in Grand Forks County have heavy expenditures for "auxiliary agencies" which includes payments for transportation. The range of expenditures for this item is from one-tenth per cent to 20.8 per cent. The range in amounts paid per pupil are from nothing to $37.00.

3. The highway problem is a limiting factor in transportation and therefore is also a limiting factor in the process of further centralization. Improvements in highways that will make an extension of present transportation routes practical must come largely from the county and townships.

CHAPTER 6

REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT

In the year 1935 the total enrollment in grade and high schools was 6,956, while the census enumeration was 9,721. This means that 2,765 boys and girls between the ages of six and twenty-one are not enrolled in school. This is 28.5 per cent of the total enumeration.

Because this number is large, and because the percentage enrolled in schools has decreased during a twenty-five year period, an attempt has been made to ascertain the reasons for non-enrollment.

Method of Gathering Data

A questionnaire, accompanied by a letter of explanation, was sent to each of fifteen classified and consolidated schools in Grand Forks County. The questionnaire consisted of space for names of boys and girls not enrolled in any school, and a check list of reasons for such non-enrollment. The principal or superintendent was asked to check his census list to obtain a complete list of non-enrolled individuals. It was asked that actual information be obtained from each individual if possible.

A slightly different form of questionnaire was sent to teachers in a random sampling of twenty rural school districts. The same check list of reasons was used in this questionnaire, but to facilitate checking,

the actual names were copied from the latest census report of each district. These census reports are on file in the county superintendent's office. Placing the names on the questionnaire proved much more satisfactory than where the respondent was asked to supply them.

Form of Letter Accompanying Questionnaire Sent to Principals and Superintendents of Classified and Consolidated Schools

McVille, N. Dak.
January 28, 1936

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In making a survey of educational conditions in Grand Forks County, it has been found that total school enrollment is less (on a percentage basis when compared with total census enumeration) than it was twenty-five years ago. This rather startling fact really means that a smaller percentage of boys and girls are taking advantage of school facilities today than was the case twenty-five years ago. If it is desirable to have boys and girls in school, then the reasons for this condition should be timely knowledge. If you would be willing to spend a few moments of your time reporting on this condition in your own district, I can compile the information in a chapter in this survey and make the information available to those interested.

Taking for granted that you will be willing to report non-attendance in your district, I am enclosing a

questionnaire to which you will first need to add the names of boys and girls on your school census that are not enrolled in any school, then check one reason for such non-enrollment. It will serve the purpose just as well if the names are omitted. To insure accuracy it will be necessary to check over your latest school census. If you can obtain the individual's reason for non-attendance, it would be better, but will be too much work in many cases.

I will greatly appreciate your help in getting at some reasons for this condition.

Cordially yours,

Form of Letter Sent to Rural School Teachers
in Each of Twenty Districts

McVille, N. Dak.
January 28, 1936

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_____

_____

I am interested in knowing the reason why boys and girls in your community are not enrolled in school although they are of school age. To get this information, I have made a copy of the latest census report of your district, and have added a check list of facts opposite each name. Will you kindly check the list to the best of your ability? If you are not familiar with all the cases, it would be best to call the family by phone, or inquire of someone who would know the circumstances.

If the boy or girl is enrolled in school now, a check in the first or second column will be all that is necessary. If the person is not enrolled in some school, will you check the reason you think best applies. Do not pay any attention to irregular school attendance. This deals only with those not enrolled in school.

This survey is being made under the supervision of Dr. A. V. Overn of the University of North Dakota. An early reply will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Reasons for Non-Enrollment in Classified and Consolidated Districts

Of fifteen questionnaires sent to classified and consolidated schools, replies were received from only seven. These seven reported total non-enrollment of ninety-nine cases. The difference between enrollment and enumeration for the six schools replying was eighty-six. They reported on over 100 per cent of possible cases. This is owing to the fact that their enrollment includes non-resident students. From this source, then, we have a small sampling of reasons for non-enrollment in this class of schools.

Please add names from your census roll not enrolled in any school, and check one reason for such non-enrollment

Name	If not enrolled in any school, check the reason from this list you think best fits each case. If you can get actual information from the individual it will be better.									
	Needed at home for work	School work too difficult	School work not interesting	Employed	Moved out of district	Illness	Enrolled in CCC	Graduated from High School	List any other reason	
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										

Figure 2

Form of Questionnaire Sent to Principals and Superintendents of Classified and Consolidated Schools

Table 22

Reasons for Non-Enrollment in Classified and Consolidated Schools of Grand Forks County 1935

Reasons for Non-Enrollment	Number of Individuals Reported	Percentage of Cases Reported
Economic reasons	8	8.1%
School work too difficult	5	5.1
School work not interesting	9	9.1
Employed	6	6.1
Moved out of district	8	8.1
Illness	2	2.0
Enrolled in CCC	4	4.0
Graduated from High School	47	47.4
No reason listed	5	5.1
Teaching school	1	1.0
Finished eighth grade	4	4.0
Total number cases reported	99	

Graduation from high school is given as a reason for non-enrollment in forty-seven cases out of the ninety-nine (Table 22). Of that group no doubt many are attending college, but no attempt was made to find out just how many are attending advanced institutions of learning.

If a larger sampling would bring out the same facts then we would have accounted for about forty-seven per cent of non-enrollment as due to the simple fact that the individuals have graduated from high school and have, therefore, automatically removed themselves from consideration.

"Economic reasons" are listed eight times, and "employed" six times. If both of these are put together we have fouteen cases or thirteen per cent of non-enrollment due to this reason. Indeed, we might add those

Check opposite each name whether or not enrolled in school. If not enrolled, check the reason you think best fits the case

Name	If not enrolled in any school check here				If not enrolled in any school, check the reason from this list you think best fits each individual case.								
	Now attending school in grades 1 to 8	Now attending high school	Needed at home for work		School work too difficult	School work not interesting	Too far to school	Moved out of district	Illness	Enrolled in CCC	Graduated from High School	List any other reason	
(Names copied from census roll)													

Figure 3

Form of Questionnaire Sent to Teachers in Rural School Districts

checked as "teaching," and "enrolled in CCC" of which there are five cases, and get twenty per cent. Other reasons listed are: School work too difficult, school work not interesting, moved out of district, illness, and finished eighth grade.

Table 23

Reasons for Non-Enrollment in Rural School Districts of Grand Forks County 1935

Reasons for Non-Enrollment	Number of Individuals Reported	Percentage of Cases Reported
Economic reasons	56	29.4%
School work too difficult	7	3.7
School work not interesting, no desire for school	39	20.5
Employed	3	1.6
Teaching school	5	2.6
Enrolled in CCC	2	1.1
Graduated from high school	26	13.7
No reason listed	2	1.1
Moved out of district	29	15.2
Finished eighth grade, no desire for high school	3	1.6
Illness	5	2.6
Married	7	3.7
Too young for school	1	1.1
Taken up trade	1	1.1
Eighteen years of age	2	.5
Twenty-one years of age	2	.5
Total number of individuals listed	170	

Reasons for Non-Enrollment in Rural School Districts

Twenty questionnaires were sent to teachers in a sampling of rural school districts of Grand Forks County. Replies were received from nineteen of the districts. The

nineteen districts from which data was secured constitutes slightly more than twenty per cent of the total number of districts in the county.

The high per cent of return on the questionnaire was no doubt due to the fact that all names were furnished on the questionnaire. All the respondent had to do was check the suitable reason for non-enrollment of each individual case.

Economic reasons ranked first among those listed for non-enrollment of boys and girls in rural districts (Table 23). Twenty-nine per cent of cases gave this reason. To this amount could be added 1.6 per cent listed as "employed," 1.1 per cent "taken up a trade," 2.6 per cent "teaching school" and get 34.7 per cent out of school for economic reasons.

Lack of interest in school work is still quite prevalent in rural districts as indicated by the 20.5 per cent of cases listing "school work not interesting" as the reason. Another 1.6 per cent gave a closely related reason: "finished eighth grade, no desire for school." This makes a total of 22.1 per cent not yet "sold" on the idea of education.

Graduation from high school is a large factor in rural school non-enrollment. This reason was given in 13.7 per cent of the cases. The fact that this group of individuals have completed the common and high school

branches removes them entirely from consideration. The scope of our concern is only up to the point of completion of high school.

There were twenty-nine cases, amounting to 15.2 per cent, reported "moved out of the district. Since the method used in this survey was to check the census list of each district for non-enrollment in school, there was no way of reporting those who had moved out in the meantime. Some of them may be enrolled in school. A small group amounting to 1.1 per cent gave "no reason" for not being enrolled.

Other reasons listed, with a small percentage in each instance, are, school work too difficult, enrolled in CCC, illness, married, too young for school (evidently an error on the part of the census clerk), eighteen years of age, and twenty-one years of age.

Reliability of the Data

The 289 cases of non-enrollment reported amount to 10.5 per cent of the total. This sampling would be reliable enough to represent general conditions but for the fact that they are practically all in the rural districts. The ninety-nine cases from classified and consolidated schools are from the smaller towns. No replies were received from the cities of Northwood, Larimore, and Grand Forks. A different set of reasons, or at least different percentages might be obtained from a study of city cases of non-enrollment.

Are the reasons listed the true reasons for not enrolling in school? Rural school teachers were asked to call the family by telephone, or inquire of someone familiar with the case, when they were not sure of the circumstances. There is no way of knowing whether the respondent gave a valid reason for the individual not being enrolled in school. Such reasons as, graduated from high school, married, employed, moved from the district, could be accurately given by one acquainted in the community. It would be more difficult to decide such reasons as, school work too difficult, school work not interesting, and possibly the economic reasons.

It would be quite a task to make a study of all cases of non-enrollment in Grand Forks County. Sufficient data has been reported on these pages to point to the significance of such a study. If nearly thirty per cent of the cases of non-enrollment in rural districts are due to economic reasons, then the school system of the county is not furnishing rural children equal opportunities. To attend high school, they must stay in town, and pay out board and room money. A complete case study of all the boys and girls not enrolled would no doubt add to the arguments for a modification of the educational system of the county.

Summary

1. Two facts presented elsewhere in this study have suggested the importance of finding reasons for non-enrollment in the schools of Grand Forks County. These facts are: (1) Boys and girls not enrolled amount to 38.5 per cent of the enumeration. (2) The percentage of those enrolled to those enumerated on the census rolls has decreased over a twenty-five year period.

2. Two types of questionnaires were sent out, one to principals and superintendents of consolidated and classified schools, the other to teachers in a sampling of rural school districts.

3. Graduation from high school accounts for 47.4 per cent of cases not enrolled in consolidated districts. Twenty per cent gave economic reasons.

4. Economic reasons ranked first in rural school districts' non-enrollment, the percentage being 34.7. There is evidence of lack of enthusiasm for school work in rural areas as shown by the 22.1 per cent reporting "not interested in school." Reasons "graduated from high school," and "moved out of district" were also important.

5. A more thorough case study of non-enrollment in Grand Forks County is recommended. Findings might point to the need for further modification of the educational system.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following points presented in this study have shown where there are economies and advantages in the larger units of school administration in Grand Forks County:

1. Otto Berg's study of "School Board Practices in Grand Forks County" shows that boards of small units are not essential since their activities are principally administrative in nature.

2. Shively's study showed the inefficiency of small districts in the matter of purchase of supplies.

3. Edward Erickson points out the handicaps under which the rural school operates, drawing applications from Walsh County.

4. Grand Forks City, the largest school district in the county, pays highest salaries to teachers without showing any larger percentage of total expenditures for this service. Rural schools pay the lowest salaries, while expending about the same percentage for instructional service.

5. The highest teacher-pupil ratio is found in Grand Forks City. The lowest ratio is found in a two-teacher town school.

6. Classified schools (the largest units) employ better trained teachers without showing any greater percentage of total expenditures for instructional service.

7. Classified schools have a broader basis of financial support than other schools.

8. The largest units make a greater effort to maintain adequate school facilities in spite of lower wealth per child.

9. The tax levy per child enrolled is much lower in the largest districts.

10. Per pupil costs are no larger in the large schools in spite of the fact that they employ better trained teachers, paying them better salaries, offering a more enriched curriculum, and providing better physical facilities.

11. Total expenditures of all school districts for general control, largely school officers salaries, amounted in 1934 to $13,691.65. Most of this amount could be saved by a county-wide administrative system.

Recommendations to be made in this study will follow closely two main considerations, that of economy and efficiency in administration, and that of complete educational offerings to the boys and girls throughout all of Grand Forks County.

In order to make desirable changes possible, it will first be necessary to secure the passage of a law by the state legislature setting up some form of A County Unit. It would be best for the legislature to do this at one fell swoop, rather than make it optional with the

counties whether or not they would choose to operate on this basis. To adopt the latter method would simply prolong the campaign of attaining the first step. Each county would have to put across the idea.

It has been pointed out that the legislature has the same power to destroy and re-create school districts that it had to create them in the first place. In fact, such a step on the part of the state would be simply carrying out the mandates of the enabling act that have not been in operation since statehood. It would remove the early handicap placed on the educational system of the state by the creation of extremely small units.

The act of the legislature setting up the County Unit should provide specifically for the following points:

1. Wipe out all present existing common independent and special school districts, except those having a minimum valuation of $1,000,000.00, that might be desirous of maintaining local autonomy.

2. Provide the method of election and duties for a County Board of Education for each county, such board to consist of five members. This board should serve without pay except for time and expense incurred while actually attending meetings. Competent men interested in education could be induced to take positions on these boards. Political office seekers would not be attracted to these positions if there was no salary in connection with the office.

Among the varied duties of this board would be that of appointing a competent, well paid administrator of the County Schools to be known as the County Superintendent of Schools. This officer would be charged with the general administration of the legislative policies of the board. He would be answerable only to the board, and would in this way be removed as far as possible from politics.

It is not recommended here that any specific set-up of school units throughout the county be made at this time. It would be one of the powers and duties of this board to make such centralizations as would be practical, and as fast as economical grouping of units could be made. It would be far better to make this an evolutionary process rather than a revolutionary one. The particular reasons for this recommendation have been mentioned elsewhere. It has been pointed out that transportation has always been a limiting factor in centralization. It was also pointed out that the peculiar situation of the North Dakota State Highway Department in their problem building of permanent highways for the state is a factor that must be considered. A County Board of Education could work with the Board of County Commissioners and by this coordinated effort work out a plan for a system of county highways that would gradually allow of a solution of the transportation problem. As fast as this could be accomplished, centralization could be made. It would systematize effort toward a very definite goal, the work of establishing good county highways.

In making centralizations, the board would study carefully all conditions and factors other than the one mentioned above. Natural trade centers, soil conditions, present existing buildings, building problems of the future, and many others would make for an intelligent planning of a really efficient system.

As an instance of the possibilities for immediate centralization, the following illustration is given. The schools of Johnstown, Honeyford, and Gilby could immediately with great benefit to all be centralized to the extent that all high school work be offered at Gilby, the other buildings being used for grades. Present building facilities, transportation facilities, and the natural trade center factor make it an ideal situation for this step toward centralization. In years to come the unit might be enlarged, and as buildings become obsolete, the outlying units be dropped completely.

Another very practical change that this board might make would be to transport high school pupils from Arvilla to Larimore, a distance of only six miles, using the Arvilla school for a grade school, and possibly including some rural districts in the latter.

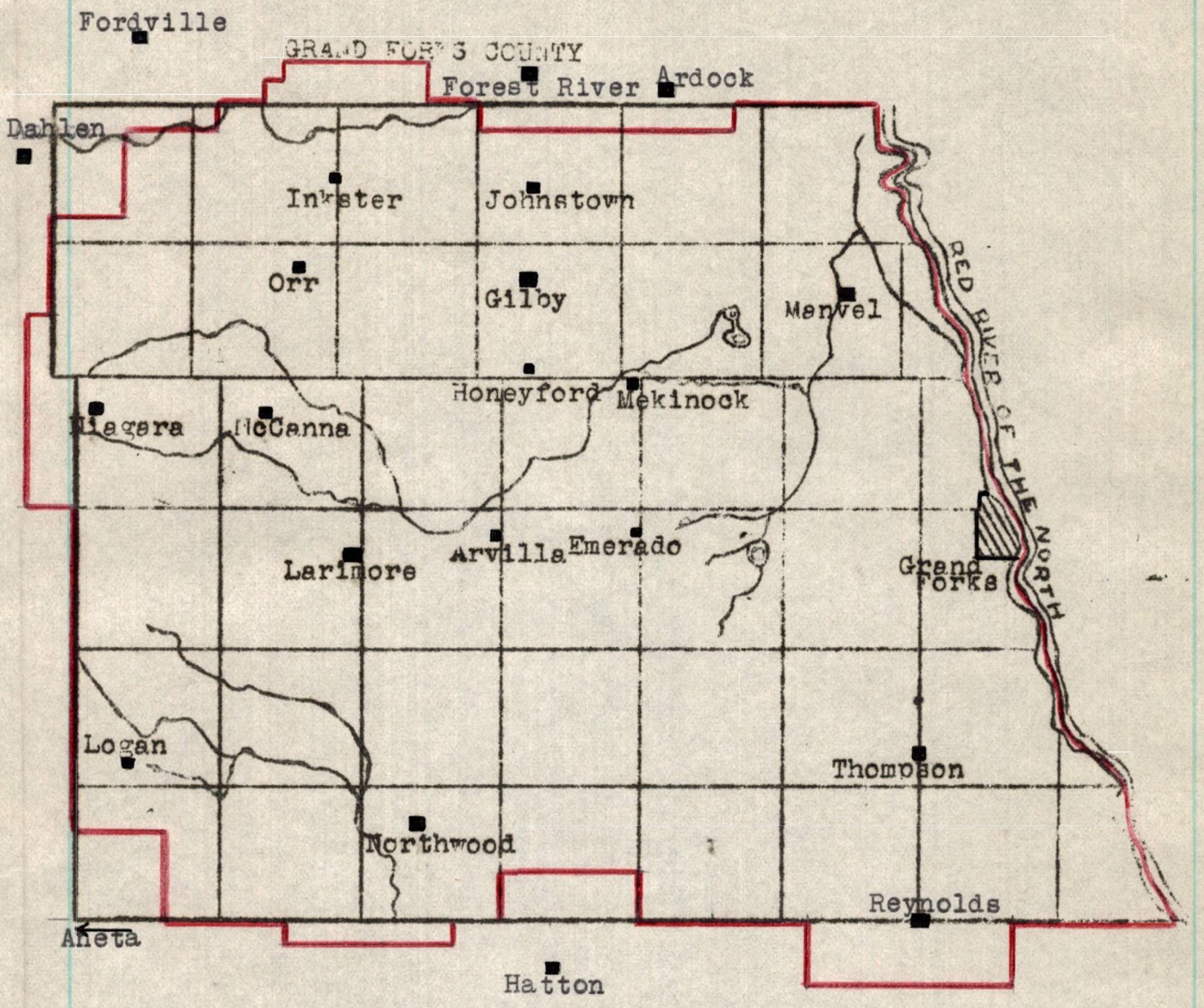
It is not the intention here to point out the changes that should or could be made, but to point out the principle that should be followed, that of gradually making such changes as would be practical.

This board would meet each month to transact routine business such as is done by boards in large units today. They would conduct surveys to determine desirable conduct of their business, and would hire experts when necessary to attain such information.

A Wider Basis of Support

As a necessary adjunct of legislative action creating some form of County Unit, it would be necessary to widen the basis for financial support. Wiping out all common school district boundaries would mean of course that tax levies to support the county school system would be spread over the entire valuation of the county, excluding, of course, those districts that would not be included in the county system. This would equalize the tax burden over all property, both real and personal in the county.

During the latter portion of the school year 1934-35, and the year 1935-36, the state equalization measure has been in operation. Income to school districts from this source has been a material help during the past year. Although figures are not included in this study this widening of the basis of support is working out a state-wide equalization of the tax burden for school purposes. As this recent feature of our present set-up is made permanent and entirely equitable, it will be a powerful factor in making possible a change to the County Unit system. When the income to local school districts is generously augmented



Map 6

Overlapping of County Boundaries

or replaced by state funds, there is no longer as stong a desire to preserve the old idea of local control in small isolated districts.

County Boundary Not an Ideal One

When we talk about a County Unit of Administration, we naturally think of the county boundary asa boundary for the school unit. In Grand Forks County, and possibly in other counties as well, the county boundary would not be the best. It would be an artificial one that would not recognize present existing conditions. If we examine a map of Grand Forks County (Figure 8), and adjoining parts of surrounding counties, we find an overlapping between counties of natural limits to school units as they exist at present. If we accept the idea of a gradual centralization to be effected over a period of years by the county Board of Education, then it would also be necessary to recognize this boundary situation.

Beginning on the southern boundary of Grand Forks County, there is the independent school district of Reynolds. The county line divides the present district into about two equal parts. Main street of the city is also the county line. The present school building is located just across the line in Traill County. It would be very impractical to set up a boundary line just one-half block away from the school. It would be better to place the area served by this district in either county. It is

suggested to include it in Grand Forks County, since it is conveniently situated near to the city of Grand Forks where the head offices of the county system would be located.

South of the central part of the county is the city of Hatton, located in Traill County. The school at Hatton is just two miles south of the county line. It is a trade center for an area in Grand Forks County, and also draws high school students from that area. It is recommended that this area, the exact boundaries of which would have to be decided by a more careful survey, be included in Traill County.

In the southwestern corner of the county is an area of about nine sections that are in the natural area of Aneta, in Nelson County. The exact line separating this area from the Northwood unit boundary would have to be worked out.

On the west, Niagara is about one-half mile from the Nelson County line. Petersburg is six miles west in Nelson County. The western boundary of the Grand Forks County unit should swing west around Niagara about two miles. On the northern border the line could swing north into Walsh County north of the Inkster unit.

Forest River is two miles north of the Grand Forks County line in Walsh County. It would seem logical to include it in the area to the south in Grand Forks County, but that should probably be left optional with the people

of such an area very much in the same manner as we now have provision for a group of taxpayers to withdraw from a district for the purpose of joining some other.